

Susan Charles

Partner

Chicago

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OVERVIEW

Susan counsels clients on all aspects of environmental law including regulatory compliance, risk assessment, enforcement defense, and environmental litigation. She routinely advises clients with respect to spill and release reporting, hazardous waste issues, permitting, and state cleanup programs.

Sue's regulatory compliance practice focuses on formulating and maintaining environmental management practices with respect to permitting, waste management, and disposal strategies. She emphasizes litigation avoidance and the development of innovative solutions to complex legal disputes. Sue's practice also evaluates the impact of existing and proposed environmental laws and regulations on transactions involving corporate and private equity clients and their effect on post-closing regulatory compliance. Her transactional work focuses primarily on identifying, delineating and quantifying environmental risk in corporate mergers and acquisitions, real estate development/redevelopment deals, and project development. Sue has substantial experience in all major areas of environmental due diligence and contract negotiation which allows her to help clients make an informed assessment and reasonable allocation of environmental risk. Her transactional practice spans the U.S. and she has worked directly with regulators from, among other states, Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington.

AWARDS

- *Chicago Business Journal*, "[Women of Influence](#)" (2021)
- *Crain's Chicago Business*' Notable Women in Law (2020, 2026)
- *Best Lawyers in America*®: Environmental Law (2019-2026)
- *Chambers USA*: Environment: Mainly Transactional, Illinois (2024-2026)
- *Legal 500 United States*: Environment: Transactional (2025-2026)

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- [Contaminated Sites + Waste Management](#)
- [Environmental + Natural Resources](#)
- [Environmental Due Diligence](#)
- [Environmental Litigation + Enforcement Defense](#)

- [Release Reporting](#)

ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- [Air Quality + Climate Change](#)
- [Chemicals, Pesticides + Product Regulation](#)
- [Contaminated Sites + Waste Management](#)
- [Ecosystem Markets](#)
- [Environmental + Natural Resources](#)
- [Environmental Due Diligence](#)
- [Environmental Litigation + Enforcement Defense](#)
- [Environmental, Social + Governance \(ESG\)](#)
- [Hydropower](#)
- [Litigation + Trial](#)
- [Natural Resources](#)
- [Release Reporting](#)
- [Water Quality + Water Resources](#)

PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Member, Board of Directors, Women's Lincoln Park Zoo Board
- Member, Energy, Environment and Resources Section, American Bar Association

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 1997
- Boston University, B.A., *cum laude*, 1993, English literature

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Illinois
- California (Inactive)

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Moderator, "[Industrial Outdoor Storage Update](#)," Bisnow, December 9, 2020.

PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author, "New York's New Spill Reporting Requirements and Potential Ramifications fo Environmental Due Diligence," *Environmental Law in New York*, Vol. 35, No. 4, April 2024.
- Co-author, "Treatment of Insurance Proceeds with the Stafford Act's Public Assistance Grant Program," *Coverage Magazine*, November-December 2011.

- Author, "Implications of Climate Change on Global Food Security," *ABA Journal of Natural Resources & Environment*, Summer 2011.

MEDIA COMMENTARY

- Profiled, "Women of Influence Honoree: Susan Charles, Troutman Pepper," *Chicago Business Journal*, October 18, 2021.