

JOHN G. BISSELL

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John Bissell is of counsel to the firm in Houston. His current focus is counseling and trial in the area of environmental litigation, including a massive tanker oil spill in federally controlled waters.

Since joining Strong, Pipkin, Nelson, Parker and Powers in Beaumont, Texas in 1971 he has tried to verdict well over one hundred cases in state and federal courts in several states. In addition, he has litigated cases to conclusion by dismissal after trial preparation with no payment of settlement by his client in numerous cases involving single plaintiffs and both small and large consolidations in multiple jurisdictions.

From early in his practice, John has represented leading industry sector companies in the earliest stages of emerging legal claims and evolving scientific knowledge. He has broad experience in the development of strategies, witness selection and preparation, scientific evidence, corporate knowledge and conduct, and trials. Where trials have not been the best course he has negotiated wise settlements, sometimes with novel settlement procedures for efficient and economical tort damages evaluation and business-based, non-monetary dispute resolution.

He was one of the earliest choices as joint defense lead counsel for major oil and chemical companies seeking cost effective trial-capable representation in toxic tort cases where the basic defenses and industry wide conduct dominated over individual company positions.

Based on his breadth and success in litigation, he has been tapped as lead and additional counsel *pro hac* in many jurisdictions across the country, in addition to providing assistance as local counsel with responsibilities from witness preparation to jury selection to full lead trial roles. His substantive local counsel roles have included major anti-trust, electric power take-or-pay, insurance coverage, and catastrophic personal injury and death cases.

Most recently, he was co-counsel in a 30 day trial of certain issues remanded on appeal to a successor federal judge in an OPA case in Philadelphia.



Primary Practice Areas:

- Toxic Tort Litigation
- Products Liability
- Environmental Litigation
- Commercial Litigation

Representative Experience:

- Texas lead counsel for manufacturers of welding consumables in claims of injury from manganese in fumes;
- Lead trial counsel for manufacturers of welding consumables in consolidated cases in several states
- Defense of accused seller of chemical/biological weapons in class action Gulf War Syndrome case;
- Representation of defendant in major fire case involving 25 death and 75 injury claims;
- Counsel for major oil and chemical companies in joint defenses of benzene and butadiene cases;
- Regional counsel and numerous trials for target asbestos insulation manufacturer;
- Successfully defended a major oil company from claims it fraudulently concealed medical conditions from workers with asbestosis;
- Texas counsel for six affiliated electric power companies in take-or-pay contract case;
- Counsel for major chemical company in class action claims resulting from foreign industrial disaster;
- Successful defense of county in federal civil rights action involving unconstitutional strip search;
- Obtained arson finding in defense of insurer of loss of dwelling;
- Represented major chemical company in dispute with state over status and tax liabilities associated with conversion of company employees to employees of contractor;
- Representation of OPA defendant in partial remand; and
- Argued appeals before Texas Court of Appeals, Texas Supreme Court and U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit

Court Admissions

- All Texas Courts
- U.S. District Courts for Eastern, Northern & Western Districts of Texas, Western District of Louisiana
- U.S. Court of Appeals-Fifth Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court

Memberships/Affiliations:

- Houston Bar Association
- Jefferson County Bar Association
- Past Member American Bar Association Executive Council, Young Lawyers Division
- Past National Chairman American Bar Association, Young Lawyers Division, Disaster Assistance Committee
- Texas Bar Foundation – Life Fellow
- Texas Association of Defense Counsel
- American Board of Trial Advocates
- International Association of Defense Counsel
- Fellow: American Bar Foundation

Education:

- University of Texas School of Law, J.D., 1971
- Lamar University, BS 1968

Honors and Awards:

- Martindale Hubbell AV rated
- Super Lawyers (a Thomson Reuters® service), Since 2006
- *Best Lawyers*® (by Levine Leichtman Capital Partners)
 - *Best Lawyers* 2019 Personal Injury Litigation – Defendants “Lawyer of the Year” in Houston
 - *The Best Lawyers in America*®
 - Commercial Litigation (2011-2022)
 - Litigation – Environmental (2011-2022)
 - Mass Tort Litigation/Class Actions – Defendants (2013-2022)
 - Personal Injury Litigation (2011-2022)
 - Product Liability Litigation – Defendants (2011-2022)