



THE NATIONAL FORUM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND TOXIC TORT ISSUES

31st Annual Conference

Union League Club
Chicago, IL

September 24 – September 26, 2025

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AGENDA

Wednesday, September 24, 2025

5:00 – 7:00 pm Networking Reception

Thursday, September 25, 2025

7:00 – 8:00 am Continental Breakfast

7:50 – 8:00 am Opening Remarks

8:00 – 8:45 am Coverage Update For 2025

- Decisions/Pending Cases Impacting Coverage for Environmental and Mass Tort Claims
- Key Issues for Coverage Disputes
- Overview of Major Bankruptcy Decisions Impacting Insurers

Patricia Santelle
White & Williams LLP
Philadelphia, PA

8:45 – 9:15 am

Primer and Update on Climate Change Litigation Against Manufacturers

- Update on Latest Developments in Climate Litigation
- Against Manufacturers Under State Public Nuisance and Consumer Protection Laws
- Observed Trends: Growing Divergence in State Court Rulings
- Legal and Public Policy Implications of Subjecting Manufacturers to Liability for Alleged Harms Caused by Global Climate Change

Phil Goldberg
Shook Hardy & Bacon, LLP
Washington, DC

9:15 – 9:45 am

Manufactured Stone Fabrication and the New Wave of Silicosis Cases

- Background: Basics and Regulations
- Science: Exposure and Epidemiology Literature, Control Measures, Disease Trends
- Litigation: Issues, Trends, and Recent Rulings

Mark Love
Hawkins Parnell
San Francisco, CA

Emily Goswami
Roux Inc.
Oakland, CA

9:45 – 10:00 am

Break

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Thursday, September 25, 2025 (continued)

10:00 – 10:45 am

Muddying the Waters: PFAS, Biosolids and Legal Uncertainty

- Federal Biosolids Regulation History and Structure Under the CWA
- The Science and Potential Implications of EPA's Biosolids Risk Assessment
- Current and Potential PFAS Rulemaking and Litigation
- CERCLA Liability Exposures for PFAS-Contaminated Biosolids
- Emerging Treatment Technologies and Best Practices for PFAS Management

Brian Gross

*MG+M The Law Firm
Boston, MA*

Howard Goldberg

*MG+M The Law Firm
Boston, MA*

Mary Gade

*Gade Environmental Group
Chicago, IL*

Mark McDaniel

*AlterEcho
Golden, CO*

10:45 – 11:15 am

PFAs Panel Biosolids

- PFAs 101: What Attorneys and Insurers Need to Know
- Sources and Pathways: Sludge and Biosolids
- Insurance Coverage Implications
- Case Studies

Christopher S. Abel

*August Mack Environmental
Indianapolis, IN*

Brianna J. Schroeder

*Janzen Schroeder
Agricultural Law, LLC
Indianapolis, IN*

11:15 – 12:00 pm

Combating Social Inflation in Asbestos and Other Litigation

- Overview and Update of Insurance Industry's Legislative Efforts
- Defense Counsel's Available Tools for Defusing Potential Nuclear Verdicts
- It Can Be Done: A Defense Verdict in a Living Meso Case
- The Insurer's Role in Claim/Litigation Management

Thomas K. Hanekamp

*Cruser, Mitchell
Chicago, IL*

Allen Kirsh

*Zurich North America
Schaumburg, IL*

Michael W. Drumke

*Swanson, Martin, Bell, LLP
Chicago, IL*

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Lunch

1:00 – 1:45 pm

From Paper Trails to AI Insights: Tackling ESI in Complex Environmental and Coverage Cases

- Scope of eDiscovery in Long-tail Environmental/Coverage Cases
- Key Discovery Challenges
- AI and OCR Applications
- Defensibility & Ethics

Melissa Hamer

*Kroger, Gardis & Regas, LLP
Indianapolis, IN*

Tammy Froelich

*Kroger, Gardis & Regas, LLP
Indianapolis, IN*

Jenny Schroeder

*CSDisco
Chicago, IL*

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Thursday, September 25, 2025 (continued)

1:45 – 2:30 pm

Asbestos Litigation: Over-Naming, Trust Transparency and Other Developments

- Update on Asbestos Litigation Trends and Strategy
- Over-Naming in Asbestos Cases and Reforms to
- Address Over-Naming
- Defense Counsel Tools to Combat Over-Naming

Mark Behrens

*Shook, Hardy & Bacon, LLP
Washington, D.C.*

Mary Margaret Gay

*Gay Jones & Kuhn PLLC
Jackson, MS*

John Kotte

*Nationwide Insurance
Wausau, WI*

2:30 – 3:00 pm

Carbon Capture and Sequestration: A Primer on Legal, Regulatory, and Insurance Issues

- Define Carbon Capture and Sequestration and Discuss its Utilization
- Legal Framework Surrounding Process and Issuance Issues a Claims Professional May Encounter
- Types of Claims that May Arise

Sidney W. Degan, III

*Degan Blanchard & Nash
New Orleans, LA*

Andrew B. Young

*State of Louisiana, Office of
Mineral Resources
Baton Rouge, LA*

Nick Spears

*Markel
Rosemont, IL*

Boarding between

3:30 – 4:00 pm

Departs at 4:00 pm

Returns at 6:00 pm

FETTI – ODYSSEY RIVER CRUISE RECEPTION

(Business Casual Attire)

Buses will be available to
transport attendees to the
dock leaving at 3:15 pm

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8:00 – 8:45 am

Back to Benzene-New Warnings and Standards for Benzene and Vinyl Chloride

- Changes in Regulations of VOC
- Remediation
- Insurance Policies and Claims Coverage
- Batch Clauses and Risk Management

Yvette Nadgir

Westfield Specialty Ins. Co.
Berkeley Heights, NJ

Russ Greateorex

HETI

Atlanta, GA

Bill Silverstein

GEI Consultants
Mount Laurel, NJ

Rick Brown

Weber Gallagher
Philadelphia, PA

Kelly Almeter

Akerman LLP
Dallas, TX

8:45 – 9:30 am

Microplastics: A Macro Problem?

- Regulatory Developments at the State and Federal Levels
- Health Risks and Scientific Uncertainty
- Insurance Implications

James Hogan

The ELAM Group
Noblesville, IN

Derek Drechsel

CTEH

Golden, CO

Amy Fitzpatrick

Co-Action Specialty Ins. Co.
Morristown, NJ

M. Claire Juliana

AON

New York, NY

9:30 – 10:00 am

Jigsaw Falling into Place: Strategies for Solving Mass Action Cases

- Use of Mass Action by Plaintiffs' Counsel
- Environmental Exposure Mass Action Challenges: Defense Strategies, Coverage, Consultants and Technology
- Tips to Minimize Future Exposure

Erin Poppler

Edlin Gallagher Huie & Blum
San Francisco, CA

Trish Shippee

Great American Ins. Group
Exton, PA

John Davies

Davies Public Affairs
Los Angeles, CA

Thomas McHugh

GSI Environmental Inc.
Houston, TX

Ilya Kosten

Sacro & Walker LLP
Glendale, CA

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Friday, September 26, 2025 (continued)

10:00 – 10:15 am	Break	
10:15 – 10:45 am	PFAS and Forever Chemicals: Liability Claims and Coverage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand nature of PFAS• Understand bases of liability exposures from PFAS• Understand current and potential future claims from PFAS – Is PFAS the next asbestos?• Understand and analyze unique and key coverage issues arising from PFAS claims	Charles W. Browning <i>Plunkett Cooney, PC</i> <i>Bloomfield Hills, MI</i>
10:45 – 11:15 am	Gasoline as a Carcinogen <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risk v. Hazard Background• IARC Class 1 Designation for Gasoline• Key Chemical Constituents• Fate, Transport and Exposure Routes• Key Health Effects and Standardized Incidence Ratios• Sensitive/Key Populations and General Public	Nicholas Rigano <i>Rigano LLC</i> <i>Melville, NY</i> Travis Kline <i>Geosyntec Consultants, Inc.</i> <i>Washington, DC</i>
11:15 – 12:00 pm	Ethylene Oxide (EtO): A Regulatory and Litigation Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basics of EtO• EtO Regulation and Uncertainty with Second Trump Administration• EtO Jury Verdicts	Vincenzo Chimera <i>K&L Gates</i> <i>Chicago, IL</i> Kenn Brotman <i>K&L Gates</i> <i>Chicago, IL</i> David Rieser <i>K&L Gates</i> <i>Chicago, IL</i>
12:00 – 12:30 pm	Insuring the Future: Navigating the Environmental Risks of Green Energy and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• BESS Unique Environmental Risk Factors• Underwriting Challenges• Most Effective Risk Mitigation Techniques• Industry and Regulatory Requirements for Deployment and Operation of BESS	Scott Recker <i>Antea Group</i> <i>Charlotte, NC</i> Jens Conzen <i>Jensen Hughes</i> <i>Chicago, IL</i> Dan Downing <i>Great American Ins.</i> <i>Exton, PA</i>

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Business Meeting

This is a Business Casual Event.

The Union League Club is an elegant experience. All club members and their guests are asked to dress appropriately.

A relaxed, well-dressed look described as ‘Smart Casual’ is welcomed throughout the club. Smart Casual may include jeans, denim, and collarless shirts. Smart Casual attire or better is permitted throughout the Clubhouse with the following exception:

In the Wigwam during lunch and evening meals expected attire is Business Casual or better. (Business Casual includes collared shirt, including turtleneck, slacks or skirt with blouse or sweater. Dress denim is not considered Business Casual.)

Individual Event dress code will be defined by each event (e.g. black tie, white tie, Business, casual, etc.). Event notices will contain dress code requirements. If no dress code is stated, the expected attire by default is “Smart Casual.”