

## Brian Bell

### Partner

[bell.brian@dorsey.com](mailto:bell.brian@dorsey.com)

Minneapolis – 612.492.6178



Brian Bell helps energy companies, manufacturers, and mining operations secure and defend the permits and regulatory approvals they need to build, operate, and grow.

Brian concentrates his practice on environmental permitting and enforcement, energy infrastructure siting, and natural resources project development, with a particular focus on the industries that keep the economy moving: energy, manufacturing, and mining.

Brian represents clients on a broad spectrum of permitting matters, from initial application and environmental review through agency enforcement proceedings and litigation. He guides energy companies through the certificate of need, siting and route permit proceedings required to build large infrastructure projects in the Upper Midwest. He helps mining companies navigate the full arc of project development. Brian advises manufacturers on environmental compliance and enforcement. Brian also assists clients with environmental due diligence in real estate transactions and mergers and acquisitions (M&A).

Brian's environmental enforcement practice is built around early, efficient resolution. He negotiates directly with state and federal regulators, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state environmental agencies, to resolve alleged violations of environmental laws and permits before they escalate. When early resolution is not achievable, Brian litigates to reduce or eliminate penalties and corrective actions. His enforcement work spans all environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), toxic release inventory (TRI) requirements, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund).

After law school, Brian clerked for Justice Alan C. Page at the Minnesota Supreme Court.

### Education

- University of Minnesota Law School (J.D., 2013)
  - *magna cum laude*
- University of Minnesota (B.A., Political Science, 2008)

### Bar Admissions

- Minnesota
- Montana
- Wisconsin

## Select Experience

- Negotiated a no-penalty administrative consent order between industrial client and the Environmental Protection Agency for alleged Clean Air Act violations after EPA initially sought a six-figure penalty.
- *Northern Iron, LLC v. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency*, Court File No. 62-CV-24-3170 (Minn. 2d Jud. Dist): Obtained a preliminary injunction preventing the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) from enforcing provisions of a Clean Air Act administrative order that would have forced the facility to cease operations.
- Assisted clients in obtaining multiple permits and permit amendments for energy infrastructure projects in Minnesota and South Dakota
- Represented mining clients in obtaining and defending mining permits and negotiating lease agreements

## Accolades

- *Best Lawyers in America*®, 2024-2026
- Dorsey & Whitney – Scales of Justice Team Award (Housing Team), 2025
- *Minnesota Monthly*, “Top Lawyers in Minnesota,” 2024
- MSBA, North Star Lawyer, 2015-2016, 2018-2019, 2022-2023
- National Moot Court Region 14 Best Petitioner Brief, 2012

## Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota
- U.S. District Court for the District of Montana
- U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska

## Professional Affiliations

- Minnesota Board of Law Examiners (2021-Present)
- Section Council – State Bar Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources Section Council (2017-2024) (Chair 2023)
- Board of Directors – Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society (2017-2025)
- Community Board – Douglas Dayton YMCA Community Board (2016 – 2021)
- Board of Directors – Citizens League (2010 – 2016)
- Board of Directors – African American Family Services (2010 – 2013)
- Tubman Safety Project *Pro Bono* Attorney
- Expungement Clinic *Pro Bono* Attorney
- Housing Clinic *Pro Bono* Attorney

## Clerkships

- Minnesota Supreme Court, Honorable Alan C. Page, 2013–2014

## Select Presentations

- [Mineral Development in Minnesota](#), November 2025
  - [Changes to Minnesota's Lobbying Laws](#), January 2025
  - [State and Federal Environmental Enforcement Actions](#), April 2025
  - [Permitting Aggregate Mines in Minnesota](#), July 2024
  - [Rulemaking in Minnesota](#), March 2024
- 

## Insights

October 8, 2026

**Energy Law: Month in Review - September 2026**

September 3, 2026

**Energy Law: Month in Review - August 2026**

August 5, 2026

**Energy Law: Month in Review - July 2026**

January 7, 2026

**Minnesota PFAS Reporting Update**

October 6, 2025

**Energy Law: Month in Review - September 2025**

October 24, 2024

**Partner Brian Bell Featured in Multiple News Outlets for Insight on SCOTUS Case "San Francisco v. EPA"**

June 18, 2024

**Legislature Expands the MPCA's Enforcement Authorities**

June 5, 2024

**Minnesota Energy Infrastructure Permitting Reform**

December 7, 2023

**Changes to Lobbying Disclosure in Minnesota**

October 11, 2023

**Uncertainty Looms: Minneapolis' 2040 Plan Hits (Another) Judicial Roadblock**

February 17, 2023

**D.C. Circuit Upholds FERC's Broadview of PURPA**

November 21, 2022

**DIG Magazine - Fourth Quarter 2022**

November 4, 2022

**FERC Increases Regulatory Oversight of Investors With Officers or Directors on  
Public Utilities' Boards**