



Chris Halgren

Partner

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PRACTICE AREAS

Oil & Gas / Energy Litigation

General Litigation

Financial Services

INDUSTRIES

Oil & Gas

Chris represents clients in a wide variety of contract, tort, secured transactions and other civil litigation matters. While the focus of his practice has been on the oil and gas industry, Chris also represents clients in a multitude of other industries such as financial services, health care and services companies.

Chris strives to identify an aggressive, yet practical approach to accomplish his clients' needs, taking into account the particular legal and business issues presented. Where litigation has been necessary, Chris has represented his clients' interests in courtrooms across Texas. Chris has obtained favorable results for his clients in Texas state and federal courts as well as in domestic and international arbitration.

With horizontal drilling transforming the energy landscape across Texas, Chris developed an emphasis on oil and gas related matters. He has represented operators, non-operators, and landowners in a variety of disputes ranging from seismic misappropriation, leasing issues, royalty disputes, title litigation, lease termination, midstream accounting and other related contractual disputes. Chris has also advised clients on and negotiated various contracts related to leasing and operational issues, such as joint operating agreements, leases, surface use agreements, boundary well agreements and unit designations.

Representative Experience

Oil & Gas/Energy Litigation

Chris's experience in this area includes:

- Lead counsel representing property owners in trespass to try title lawsuit related to land in South Texas wherein final summary judgment was granted in clients' favor by the District Court in La Salle County, Texas.
- Co-counsel representing lessors in an oil and gas lease dispute concerning royalty and pooling-related claims in Jefferson County, Texas. The court reaffirmed previously entered orders and rendered a final judgment in favor of clients.
- Co-counsel in deed construction dispute related to royalty reservation in South Texas property wherein final summary judgment was granted in clients' favor by in the 81st District Court in Karnes County, Texas. Judgment also granted attorneys' fees in favor of the clients.
- Managing docket of over 100 lawsuits as lead counsel brought to determine title to surface and mineral rights in South Texas to recover ownership of hundreds of valuable surface and mineral rights in the Eagle Ford play.

- Co-counsel representing of an independent oil and gas company in the prosecution of claims for misappropriation of trade secrets, breach of a license agreement and other claims.
- Assisting in the representation of an offshore oil producer prosecuting claims for breach of a production-handling agreement, along with tort claims related to damage done to the underlying reservoir.
- Assisting in the representation of a large oil and gas company in the prosecution of a commercial lease audit dispute.
- Assisting in the representation of a large oil and gas company in defense of an action that alleged breach of contract, along with various business torts related to the delivery of and accounting for natural gas at a gas processing plant.
- Assisting in the representation of a South Texas landowner in an oil and gas lease dispute related to bonus payments and the enforcement of a favored nations clause.
- Assisting in the representation of an East Texas mineral interest owner in a trespass to try title action.
- Assisting in the representation of an independent oil and gas company in defense of personal injury claims asserted by an employee of an independent contractor.

COMPLEX BUSINESS Litigation

Chris's work includes:

- Lead counsel in breach of contract and conversion action for national lending institution for recovery of debt and intentional destruction of secured property wherein case was resolved favorably for client in pre-trial mediation.
- Lead counsel in the defense of a limited partner as a defendant in an action alleging breach of a personal guaranty. Client received favorable settlement prior to trial.
- Serving as co-counsel in the defense of a transportation company in federal district court against allegations of breach of a transportation management agreement and breach of fiduciary duty, among other claims.
- Co-counsel in prosecution of breach of contract action for seller of industrial equipment.
- Co-counsel in defense of claims under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act and the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act, among other claims, related to home foreclosure.
- Co-counsel in the representation of an international company in the prosecution of a breach of contract action decided by the London Court of International Arbitration.
- Co-counsel in the enforcement of a non-compete agreement on behalf of nationwide hospitalist company wherein a final arbitration award was granted in favor of client.

OIL & GAS TRANSACTIONS

Chris's work includes:

- Drafting and negotiating leases, surface use agreements, boundary well agreements, and unit designations.
- Analyzing existing leases and operating agreements to develop operational strategies for operators in connection with development of field.

Publications & Presentations

- McGinnis Lochridge Oil & Gas Newsletter: Producer's Edge, Vol. 2, Issue 2 (May 12, 2020)
- Contributor, McGinnis Lochridge Oil & Gas Newsletter: Producer's Edge, Vol. 2, Issue 1 (February 10, 2020)
- Oil & Gas Newsletter: Producer's Edge, Vol. 1, Issue 2 (August 1, 2019)
- McGinnis Lochridge Featured in Law360 and San Antonio Business Journal for Securing \$44 Million Win for Client (July 19, 2019)
- Co-Author, *Documenting Oil and Gas Leasehold Transactions to Survive the Statute of Frauds*, 43rd Annual Ernest E. Smith Oil, Gas and Mineral Law Institute, UT Law CLE, Houston, Texas (April 14, 2017)
- Co-Author, Texas Court Holds That Permit of Injection Well May Be Challenged Outside Railroad Commission and Travis County Via Injunctive Relief, National Association of Division Order Analyst (NADOA) Q1 Newsletter (January/February/March 2017)
- Presenter, *Royalty Litigation*, 29th Annual Energy Law Institute, The Center for American and International Law, Houston, Texas (September 30, 2016)
- Speaker, *Production in Paying Quantities Litigation*, Houston Association of Professional Landmen Spring Seminar, Houston Association of Professional Landmen, Houston, Texas (May 7, 2016)
- High Court Declines Review of Dispute Over Oil Deed Interpretation: Jonathan Baughman, Partner and Chris Halgren, Associate of McGinnis Lochridge featured in an article in Texas Lawyer. (October 14, 2015)
- Texas Supreme Court to hear case that may have implications on development of groundwater in Texas (September 2015)
- Speaker, *Interpreting Royalty Clauses after Chesapeake Exploration, LLC v. Hyder*, North Houston Association of Professional Landmen Luncheon, North Houston Association of Professional Landmen, Houston, Texas (September 5, 2015)
- Author & Presenter, *2014 - 2015 Case Law & Legislative Update*, Southwest Land Institute, American Association of Professional Landmen, Dallas, TX (April 27, 2015)
- Co-Author (with Austin Brister), *Production in Paying Quantities: A Framework for Analyzing Lease Perpetuation Issues*, Section Report of the Oil, Gas & Energy Resources Law Section of the State Bar of Texas, Volume 40, Number 2 / Winter 2015 (January 2015)
- Author, Oil & Gas Lease Perpetuation: Operating, Reworking, Maintaining, and Production
- Co-author, *Legal Update: Recent Developments in Non-Regulatory Oil & Gas Law*, American Association of Professional Landmen, Southwest Land Institute (April 2014)
- Author, *Here's What's New!! "Merriman v. XTO Energy, Inc."*, Oil & Gas Alert, McGinnis, Lochridge & Kilgore, L.L.P. (July 2013)
- Author, *Here's What's New!! "Reeder v. Wood County Energy, LLC, et al"*, Oil & Gas Alert, McGinnis, Lochridge & Kilgore, L.L.P. (September 2012)

Professional Associations & Community Involvement

- Houston Bar Association: Oil, Gas & Mineral Law Section

- Institute for Energy Law (Advisory Board)
- Garland R. Walker American Inn of Courts (2014)
- Baylor Bear Foundation
- Second Baptist Church

Professional Recognition

- *Benchmark Litigation*, 40 and Under Hot List (2021)
- Texas Super Lawyers Rising Stars list, a Thomson Reuters service, Business Litigation (2014-2021)

Court Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
- United States District Courts for the Eastern, Northern, Southern and Western Districts of Texas

Bar Admissions

- Texas

Education/Professional Background

- The University of Houston Law Center, J.D., 2009 (*cum laude*, Order of the Barons; *Houston Journal of International Law*)
- Baylor University, B.A., 2005