



Jeffrey Carlin

Partner

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Related Services

Environment, Land Use & Natural Resources ■ Environmental Litigation ■ Land Use ■ Environmental Appellate Litigation ■ Toxic Torts ■ Perfluoroalkyl & Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Jeff Carlin focuses his practice on complex litigation involving the environment and land use entitlements, as well as environmental permitting and compliance matters. Jeff advises clients and litigates cases implicating various state and federal environmental laws such as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), planning and zoning laws, CERCLA, the Clean Water Act, and state water quality laws.

Jeff counsels clients to ensure that documents prepared in compliance with CEQA and other environmental statutes can be defended in subsequent litigation. Jeff frequently defends project approvals in trial and appellate courts, and represents petitioners challenging administrative decisions. His environmental litigation experience includes defending toxic tort actions as well as public nuisance cases involving environmental contamination claims.

Jeff also represents clients in site clean-ups at federal and state Superfund sites involving a range of facilities including mixed-use landfills, manufacturing plants, and other industrial operations. Additionally, he has significant experience litigating CERCLA cost-recovery and contribution actions.

Jeff is recognized in the 2023 and 2024 editions of *The Best Lawyers in America*[®] for Litigation – Environmental.

Jeff is on the board of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and co-chairs its Land Use, Construction, and Housing Council.

Jeff received his J.D. from the University of Southern California, where he was a member of the Order of the Coif and the *Southern California Law Review*.

Representative Experience

- Represented an auto racing sanctioning and operating company to obtain land use and CEQA approvals for the redevelopment of a major motorsports facility near Los Angeles.
- Defending a real estate developer in a mass tort action involving more than 100 plaintiffs asserting personal injuries and property damages arising from alleged releases of hazardous particulates during construction.
- Defending a private university against state common law claims filed by a city alleging historical contamination from a federally-funded research and development center operated by the university has impacted the city's drinking water supply wells.

- Representing a real estate developer in two lawsuits challenging the County of Orange’s decision to approve two mixed-use projects (commercial and residential) valued at over \$4 billion on portions of the former Marine Corps Air Station El Toro now owned by the County and located within the City of Irvine.
- Representing a real estate developer in a putative class action and individual lawsuits seeking personal injury and property damage from the alleged failure to disclose the presence of radioactive substances at a former naval shipyard that is the subject of San Francisco’s largest development project in a century.
- Representing client in connection with entitlements and CEQA compliance for large-scale e-commerce and warehouse distribution center near Los Angeles.
- Defended the developer of the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza Master Plan Project against litigation challenging project approvals under CEQA and the Fair Housing Act.
- Represented an international shopping-center developer in obtaining entitlements and CEQA review for a large-scale development, including 1,400 residential units.
- Represented a former pesticide manufacturer in the investigation and remediation of a closed hazardous waste landfill in West Covina, CA, and the pursuit of contribution from thousands of potentially responsible parties.
- Defended an agrochemical company in a series of public nuisance and product liability suits by municipalities and government entities throughout the West Coast alleging PCB contamination in various waterbodies. Member of the team that obtained summary judgment disposing of plaintiff the City of San Diego’s case in the first of these suits to be adjudicated by a trial court.
- Represented a former pesticide manufacturer in the clean-up of a Superfund site in Los Angeles and related CERCLA cost-recovery litigation.
- Represented a leading seawater desalination developer to obtain multiple agency approvals for a 50-million gallon per day desalination facility in Carlsbad, CA, and defended approvals in multiple state court lawsuits. Argued and briefed an appeal defending the final approval by the regional water board. *Surfrider Foundation v. Cal. Regional Water Quality Control Bd.*, 211 Cal. App. 4th 557.
- Represented a shipbuilder in administrative proceedings regarding the remediation of contaminated sediment in the San Diego Bay and in related cost-recovery and contribution litigation, obtaining a favorable settlement for the client.
- Defended a series of highly publicized CEQA lawsuits in which the opponent sought to prohibit the annual Independence Day fireworks display in La Jolla, CA. The litigation was settled after opponent’s efforts to enjoin the fireworks show were unsuccessful.
- Represented a commercial real estate company in the defense of land use approvals for a major expansion of a regional shopping center in La Jolla, CA. *CREED v. City of San Diego*, 184 Cal. App. 4th 1032.
- Defended an aerospace company in federal RCRA and CERCLA cost recovery actions involving TCE and perchlorate contamination in the Rialto-Colton Groundwater Basin.
- Represented the petitioners against the Los Angeles Unified School District over demolition of the Ambassador Hotel. The case resulted in a settlement after the school district was enjoined from demolishing the hotel.

Publications & Presentations

Publications

- “The California Environmental Quality Act: Appellate Decisions,” *Real Estate Finance Journal*, April 19, 2024.
- *Land Use Matters* March 2024 – CEQA Appellate Decisions & Other Legal Developments

- “Godot Arrives: CEQA Reform at Last?” *Daily Journal*, August 11, 2023.
- “Challenges to Adequate Housing Measures Continue,” *LA Daily Journal*, August 26, 2022.
- “SoCal Air District Adopts First-of-Its-Kind ‘Indirect Source Rule’,” *The Daily Journal*, June 7, 2021.
- “Fracking Ban Bill Fails, for Now,” *The Daily Journal*, April 16, 2021.
- “EPA Offers Few Answers in PFAS Disposal Guidance,” *Law360*, February 8, 2021.

Professional & Community Engagement

- Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, board of governors
- Los Angeles County Bar Association, Environmental Section, Executive Committee

Education

- University of Southern California (J.D., 2003)
- University of Southern California (B.A., 2000)

Admitted to Practice

- California