

James K. Vines (Jim)

Partner

Environmental, Health and Safety

Atlanta: +1 404 572 4822

Washington, D.C.: +1 202 383 8921

jvines@kslaw.com



Jim Vines specializes in environmental, health and safety, or EHS, matters and is head of our U.S. OSHA and international health & safety practice. A substantial portion of his practice is advising clients in response to industrial accidents resulting in serious injuries, fatalities and catastrophic damage to facilities. He has had leadership roles in such matters for over 25 years and has handled major industrial incident and crisis response in the U.S. and overseas with particular experience in the oil and gas, chemical, petro-chemical, automotive, and rubber/synthetic rubber industries. Jim also represents clients in other corporate crises situations involving high profile government investigation and enforcement actions addressing EHS and other regulatory compliance issues. A common characteristic of these matters is the need for privileged internal investigations to support response to numerous simultaneous government investigations involving civil and criminal scrutiny. Such matters also typically include challenges to the adequacy of corporate governance processes related to regulatory compliance.

Jim is a former United States Attorney and was a law clerk to the Chief Justice, United States Supreme Court, and to a senior United States District Judge. He served for eight years as head of EHS for a large global manufacturer.

Jim has also advised clients in EHS regulatory and transactional due diligence matters in the U.S. and across a large number of jurisdictions around the world. He frequently provides counsel on compliance with OSHA's Process Safety Management, or PSM, standard and other process safety issues beyond the reach of the PSM regulations. From his work in the oil and gas industry, Jim has strong familiarity and experience with the industry's operational integrity/operational excellence management systems (OIMS/OEMS) applied in upstream (offshore and onshore), midstream, downstream and marine operations.

Jim has counseled and represented clients in litigation related to most of the major federal environmental laws and many counterpart state laws. Over the course of his career, he has represented clients at over 400 federal CERCLA (Superfund), RCRA Corrective Action and state law regulated environmental cleanup sites.

As a United States Attorney, Jim prosecuted federal environmental crimes and served as a member of the Attorney General's Environmental Issues Subcommittee, dealing with national environmental

prosecutorial initiatives.

Credentials

EDUCATION

J.D., Washington and Lee University

B.S., Washington and Lee University

ADMISSIONS

Supreme Court of the United States

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit

U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee

District of Columbia

Georgia

Tennessee

Virginia

CLERKSHIPS

Law Clerk, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, Supreme Court of the United States

Law Clerk, Hon. Robert R. Merhige, Jr., U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

ASSOCIATIONS

Tennessee (active), Washington, D.C. (active), Virginia (inactive), Georgia (active)

Recognition

Environmental Litigation

BEST LAWYERS, 2016 & 2017

Insights

CLIENT ALERT

January 20, 2022

Supreme Court Stays OSHA Vaccine-or-Test Mandate for Large Businesses

December 10, 2021

OSHA Pushes Ahead With Final Vax Or Test Rule Despite Court Challenges

December 2, 2021

Major TCEQ Rulemaking Impacts Industrial Companies in Texas

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Events

CONFERENCE

January 31, 2017

Decommissioning Workshop Energy Forum

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT

February 11, 2021

Karl Heisler, Peter Hsiao, Jim Vines to Speak at Texas General Counsel Forum About Environmental and Workplace Safety Law Under the Biden Administration

WEBINAR

October 16, 2014

REACH: EU Environmental Regulations That Apply to U.S. Companies

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News

IN THE NEWS

August 2, 2021 • Source: Law360

Jim Vines, Michael Taylor, Chris Burris and Stephen Cummings counsel industrial pipe connection company ASC Engineered Solutions before a Tennessee federal court, which awarded it \$1.5M in a lawsuit accusing a rival of swiping trade secrets

December 16, 2019 • Source: Bloomberg Environment

Jim Vines discusses why an employer who allows construction-site workers to listen to music via headphones face several possible legal repercussions

RECOGNITION

August 21, 2020

The Best Lawyers in America Recognizes 128 King & Spalding Lawyers in its 2021 Guide

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