

## Les Oakes

Partner  
*Environmental, Health and Safety*

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Les Oakes specializes in environmental law. A partner in our Environmental practice, Les works with clients on negotiations, litigation, permits and compliance concerns in a variety of environmental matters, including transactions.

Les advises clients in a wide range of environmental matters, including Resource Conservation and Recovery Act compliance and corrective action; Superfund cleanup matters and Brownfields limitations of liability; air and water permits; and environmental audits and transactions.

Previously, Les was an environmental engineer with the Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. In more than 11 years with the EPD, he worked in the air, hazardous waste and water branches, conducting compliance inspections, writing permits and participating in enforcement proceedings.

Les has been recognized by *Chambers USA* as a leading environmental lawyer in Georgia for more than 10 years.

### Matters

Negotiated RCRA permits and corrective action plans in the following jurisdictions: Nevada, Idaho, Arkansas, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky and Puerto Rico.

Negotiated withdrawal without penalties of a \$1 million claim brought against a chemical manufacturer for alleged air permit violations.

Successfully defended a PSD permit for the first coal-fired power plant to be built in Georgia in more than 25 years.

Advising a second coal-fired power plant project in Georgia.

Advises a chemical manufacturer located in Georgia on PSD and NSPS issues.

Advises a chemical manufacturer in Alabama on PSD and NSPS issues.

Negotiated the first water permit variance issued in Georgia recognizing increased discharge limits based on study of bioavailability of metal.

Negotiated the first Georgia variable flow oxygen injection permit, which permitted discharge levels

below minimum federal and state dissolved oxygen standards.

Handled water issues in Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina, Pennsylvania and Florida.

Advised clients on TMDL issues.

In 1990, negotiated one of first prospective purchaser agreements for company to buy part of old mining facility without being subject to claims for the cost of cleanup of contamination from previous owners.

Successfully removed multiple sites from the Georgia Hazardous Site Inventory.

Currently representing clients in Superfund matters in Alabama, Georgia, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina and Texas.

Handled Superfund sites in California, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Texas, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Colorado, Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.

Litigated Title V permit before Georgia Administrative Law Judge.

Led the defense of a 21-day administrative hearing of a PSD permit for the first new coal-fired power plant in Georgia.

Provided environmental advice and strategy for litigation in Ecuador involving claim that oil company violated applicable environmental laws.

Advised oil company client in multi-district MTBE litigations.

Advised clients on environmental claims in litigation in Texas, Georgia, Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida.

Advised client on environmental issues involved in criminal proceeding and negotiated favorable resolution.

Conducted audits of numerous facilities—all media.

Developed and implemented audit programs for several clients.

Led a team of lawyers in a focused internal investigation of a client's Clean Air Act reporting practices.

Advised buyers, sellers and lenders on all aspects of environmental law in transactions including assessments of environmental claims and potential exposure.

Negotiated provisions to address environmental issues in complex real estate, corporate and bankruptcy transactions.

Advises clients on the availability and applicability of Brownfields statutes.

## Credentials

### EDUCATION

J.D., Georgia State University

M.S., Georgia State University

B.M.E., Georgia Institute of Technology

### ADMISSIONS

Georgia

### ASSOCIATIONS

State Bar of Georgia (Member, Environmental Law Section)

American Bar Association (Member, Natural Resources Section)

## Recognition

Leading Environmental Lawyer: Georgia

CHAMBERS USA

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## Insights

### CLIENT ALERT

*May 1, 2019*

New York City and Los Angeles Require New Building Standards to Address Climate Change

### NEWSLETTER

*May 8, 2019*

Energy Newsletter – May 2019

*April 9, 2019*

Energy Newsletter – April 2019

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## News

### CASES & DEALS

*July 18, 2019*

Cortland to Acquire Pure Multi-Family REIT in a Going Private Transaction

### RECOGNITION

*August 16, 2019*

The Best Lawyers in America Recognizes 115 King & Spalding Lawyers in its 2020 Guide

King & Spalding Earns Top Rankings in Chambers USA 2019 Guide

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