

G. John Samms

Associate



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Language(s) spoken: English

Bar Admission(s): Newfoundland and Labrador,
2016

Legal Assistant(s): [Sharon Tucker](#)

John is uniquely positioned to provide advice and advance interests on some of the most complex matters facing the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Since joining Stewart McKelvey, John has provided legal and strategic counsel to leading natural resource, mining and energy clients. John has expertise in regulatory compliance, environmental assessment, and public law, including constitutional and administrative law.

John's passion for the natural resources and energy sector predates his time as a lawyer – he studied and wrote about both the fallout of the 1969 power contract between CFLCo and Hydro Quebec as well as the Atlantic Accord while pursuing Bachelor's and Master's degrees in political science at Memorial University. His immense knowledge of the past uniquely positions him to advise clients on how best to approach the future.

Prior to joining Stewart McKelvey, John provided legal counsel to the Premier's Office – some of his representative experience includes:

- Member of the lead negotiating team as part of the \$2.5 Billion Hibernia Dividend Backed Annuity Agreement – an aspect of the 2019 Atlantic Accord renewal.
- Advising on provincial rate mitigation efforts to account for anticipated rate increases after the Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project.

Outside of his busy natural resources and energy practice, John is also an experienced litigator, where he has experience:

- Defending against applications for an election recount in the district of St. John's East – Quidi Vidi.
- Acting as co-counsel for the Toronto Maple Leafs ECHL affiliate, the Newfoundland Growlers, in a highly publicized lease dispute with St. John's Sports and Entertainment Limited.
- Defending against multiple challenges to a development in the St. John's Battery region.

In addition to his practice in energy, natural resources and litigation, John also represents employers on labour and employment issues, a skillset strengthened by his time working at the Premier's Office on the province's Collective Bargaining Steering Committee. John also represents municipalities on tax issues – in 2021, the City of St. John's appointed John as Commissioner of the Assessment Review Court.

Practice Areas

Energy
Environmental & Natural Resources
Human Rights
Insurance
Labour & Employment
Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution
Media, Advertising & Marketing
Municipal
Privacy

Education & Career

Education

University of New Brunswick, JD, 2015
Memorial University of Newfoundland, MA, 2012
Memorial University of Newfoundland, BA, 2010

Activities

Member, Canadian Bar Association
Advisory committee member, Drug Treatment Court Feasibility Study: An Opportunity for Hope
Commissioner, City of St. John's Assessment Review Court
Board Member, Legal Appointments Board for Provincial Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Instructor, "Law, Governance and Public Policy" and "Constitutional Law", Memorial University

Accolades

Winner of New Brunswick Trial Lawyers Association Prize for best performance in Trial Practice

Thought Leadership

The Winds of Change (Part 4): A Review of Rental and Royalty Regimes for Wind Development on Crown Lands: Options for Newfoundland and Labrador's Economic Wind Policy

August 03, 2022

The winds of change (part 3): Newfoundland and Labrador releases wind energy guidelines

[July 27, 2022](#)

The winds of change (part 2): Crown Land

[July 21, 2022](#)

Update: The winds of change (part 1) - Newfoundland and Labrador Government signaling major shift in energy policy

[July 06, 2022](#)

Right time to strike - Courts less reticent to strike pleadings in Newfoundland and Labrador

[August 12, 2021](#)

Newfoundland and Labrador mandates masks in workplaces

[August 24, 2020](#)

Temporary lay off timeline extended to 26 weeks from 13... temporarily

[June 15, 2020](#)

COVID-19 public health emergency in Newfoundland and Labrador - what you need to know

[March 19, 2020](#)

Are you compliant with the *Canada Elections Act*? New changes mean entities ought to be careful in assessing their obligations

[September 09, 2019](#)

Hydro-Quebec now subject to annual energy cap, but not a monthly cap, under much-disputed 1969 power contract:

Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corp. v Hydro-Quebec, 2019 QCCA 1072

[June 24, 2019](#)