

JOSEPH V. LESINSKI

CO-CHAIR, CONSTRUCTION INJURY LITIGATION PRACTICE GROUP
SHAREHOLDER



AREAS OF PRACTICE

General Liability
Automobile Liability
Product Liability
Hospitality & Liquor Liability
Construction Injury Litigation
Commercial Litigation
Trucking & Transportation Liability
Premises & Retail Liability
Catastrophic Claims Litigation

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ADMISSIONS

Pennsylvania
2012

U.S. District Court Western District
of Pennsylvania
2014

EDUCATION

Saint Louis University School of
Law (J.D., 2006)

University of Dayton (B.A., 2003)

HONORS & AWARDS

AV® Preeminent™ by Martindale-
Hubbell®

ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

Allegheny County Bar Association

Pennsylvania Bar Association

The International Amusement &
Leisure Defense Association
(IALDA), Member

YEAR JOINED

2012

OVERVIEW

Joe is a shareholder in the Casualty Department and concentrates his practice in the defense of companies and individuals in complex civil litigation matters. In this capacity, he has successfully handled numerous complex product liability, premises liability, auto liability, trucking and transportation liability, dram shop and construction accident cases involving property damage, serious personal injury and death throughout the state and federal courts of Pennsylvania. He routinely defends manufacturers, suppliers and retailers of electronics, industrial equipment, food products, farm equipment, sports equipment and others.

A significant portion of Joe's practice is dedicated to construction litigation. As co-chair of the Construction Injury Litigation Practice Group, he handles a wide range of construction injury and defect cases. These matters are complex and require a deep understanding of the construction industry. He represents contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers, engineers, architects, and other construction professionals throughout Pennsylvania. Joe has handled a wide range of construction injury cases, representing contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers, engineers, architects, and other construction professionals throughout Pennsylvania. His experience includes defending against personal injury claims arising from construction site accidents, such as falls from heights, scaffolding and ladder failures, equipment malfunctions, trench collapses, electrical injuries, and other workplace hazards inherent to the construction process.

Joe graduated from the University of Dayton in 2003 and earned his law degree from Saint Louis University School of Law in 2006.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Does the Fair Share Act Apply to Faultless Plaintiffs? A Defense Position In the Wake of Spencer v. Johnson

Pittsburgh
General Liability
December 1, 2021

Will COVID-19 Cases Successfully Challenge Employer Immunity from Civil Claims Under the Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation Act?

Pittsburgh
General Liability
Workers' Compensation
April 1, 2020
Defense Digest, Vol. 26, No.

CLASSES/SEMINARS TAUGHT

Health Club Claims, Marshall Dennehey Client Webinar, February 5, 2025

Litigating Premises and Products Liability Cases – Key Issues Impacting Claims Analysis, Marshall Dennehey Client Presentation, May 21, 2024

An Overview of Pennsylvania Law for Auto Law & Premises Claims, Marshall Dennehey Virtual Client Presentation, February, 2021

An Overview of Commercial Auto Insurance in Pennsylvania & Ohio, Marshall Dennehey Client Presentation, January 26, 2021

Jurisdictional Trends & The COVID-19 Impact on FL NY NJ & PA, Marshall Dennehey Virtual Client Presentation, December, 2020

Vagaries of Product Liability Laws in the Post-Tincher Time Period, Client Seminar, May 2018

Construction Defect Litigation: From A to Z, National Business Institute, Pittsburgh, PA, April 2015

PUBLISHED WORKS

"Does the Fair Share Act Apply to Faultless Plaintiffs? A Defense Position in the Wake of Spencer v. Johnson," CounterPoint, newsletter of the PA Defense Institute, December 2021.

RESULTS

Defense Verdict Obtained After Seven-Day Bench Trial

Product Liability
September 18, 2025

We received a defense decision after a seven-day bench trial in a product liability action in which the exposure in the case exceeded \$30 million. Our client designs, sells and services engineered equipment for the energy industry, including natural gas compression apparatuses for use in transmission pipeline systems. In 2015, the client sold the plaintiff two reciprocating compressor systems to replace outdated equipment at a station located near Downingtown, PA. The compressor systems were designed to inject oil into the gas stream for piston lubrication.

Summary Judgment for Wellhead Manufacturer.

Product Liability
May 11, 2018

We obtained summary judgment on behalf of a wellhead manufacturer in a product liability matter pending in Western Pennsylvania. The plaintiff drill operator alleged a wellhead was defectively designed, causing oil and gas to escape during operation, which led to a fire at the well site. The plaintiff asserted economic losses in excess of \$1.4 million. We successfully argued that the plaintiff failed to elicit sufficient expert opinion to support the defect claim and also spoliated evidence in discarding the subject wellhead.

SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Successful defense in \$30 million product liability trial. Obtained major defense result for our client in a product liability lawsuit where the Plaintiff's final pre-trial demand was \$22 million and claimed exposure exceeded \$30 million. The dispute arose after Plaintiff alleged compressor systems designed and sold by our client caused weld debris to migrate downstream, damaging filtration devices and allowing excess lubricating oil into a natural gas pipeline, which allegedly led to multimillion-dollar losses at a power plant. Through material testing and expert testimony, we established that the weld debris claim was unfounded and that Plaintiff's own design decisions, inadequate maintenance, equipment failures, and poor system response were the more likely causes of the contamination. Based on this evidence, Plaintiff was unable to meet its burden of proof. Our client paid nothing to resolve the case despite the significant exposure.

Obtained a defense verdict in an automobile liability jury trial on behalf of an international oilfield services company and its employee. The employee was operating a semi-trailer truck while hauling 40,000 pounds of drilling equipment. The plaintiff alleged that she was rear-ended by the truck while attempting to merge onto the highway at a cloverleaf intersection. The plaintiff's passenger vehicle was pushed off the highway and rolled multiple times. Through the testimony of an accident reconstruction expert, Joe effectively established that the plaintiff had come to a complete stop on the side of the highway while attempting to merge and had pulled out in front of the truck just seconds prior to impact, obtaining a maximum speed of only 25 mph. The jury returned a verdict finding the plaintiff at fault for the accident.

Secured an insignificant damage award in a premises liability jury trial involving a large daycare facility. Plaintiffs, the parents of a minor child at the time of the incident, argued that the daycare was negligent in failing to provide adequate supervision of their child. The child, who was 4 months old at the time of the incident, was bitten on the face by an older child while the care provider momentarily left the room to obtain a stroller.

Obtained Summary Judgment on behalf of a well head manufacturer in a products liability matter. The plaintiff drill-operator alleged that the well head was defectively designed, causing oil and gas to escape during operation leading to a fire at the well site. Plaintiff asserted economic losses in excess of \$1,400,000. Joe successfully argued that plaintiff failed elicit sufficient expert opinion to support the defect claim and further spoliated evidence in discarding the subject well head.

Prevailed on preliminary objections in the nature of a demurrer in favor of the mother of a mentally ill individual who went on shooting spree at a national behavioral health care provider. The shooting incident resulted in one death and personal injuries to several others and received a great deal of media attention. Plaintiffs claimed the shooters mother should be liable because she "took charge" of her adult son and voluntarily assumed a duty to control him. Joe argued that the mother had no duty to control her adult son under Restatement (Second) of Torts Sections 319 and 324A. In a 26-page opinion dismissing all claims against the mother, the judge held that "tort law does not impose a duty on a parent of an adult child to control the conduct of that child so as to prevent the child from causing physical harm to another."

Obtained a defense verdict of behalf of the County of Beaver in a case involving an individual who was injured by fencing while playing softball. Joe effectively established the lack of any actionable defect.