

Dennis J. Cotter

Chicago, IL

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PARTNER

Overview

Litigating cases involving high-stakes multi-million dollar exposures is nothing new to Dennis. As a senior member of the firm's business and general litigation group, he has been defending construction, industrial and commercial clients in the courtroom for more than 30 years, in cases ranging from catastrophic injury, construction defect, commuter rail and FELA and commercial contract disputes, to product liability, medical malpractice, professional liability and more. He is no stranger to the courtroom, having successfully represented clients in jury trials his entire career. Consequently, clients routinely seek Dennis' guidance and advice regarding problematic disputes and whether to seek early resolution or win at trial. He is a key member of the firm's catastrophic loss and emergency response teams, as well as the OSHA practice.

Dennis encourages his clients to remain involved and proactive during litigation, testing theories and strategies and asking the tough questions about the issues and outcomes. It is in this way that he learns more about his clients' businesses, and as a result, becomes not only their litigation counsel, but a trusted business colleague as well.

Dennis also provides general legal consulting to his clients, including preparation of contracts, developing strategies to protect their businesses from risk, and more. The lessons learned litigating complex disputes have provided him real life education about how to avoid those litigated issues in the future. In spite of his active trial practice, as a trained mediator, Dennis appreciates that the best resolution to a business dispute, if possible, is a business solution, not litigation.

Dennis is a founding member of the firm. As a senior member of the general litigation group and founder and co-chair of the construction service group, Dennis supervises a team providing comprehensive litigation and transactional services to many lines of business, including the construction industry. Dennis influences the strategic direction of the firm, ensuring each of our attorneys is working to exceed client expectations in every area of practice.

SERVICES

Construction

General Liability

Rail Transportation

EDUCATION

DePaul University College of Law, J.D.

University of Notre Dame, B.B.A., Accounting

ADMISSIONS

Illinois

Experience

Rare FELA Not Guilty Verdict Obtained in a Case Against a Commuter Rail Provider

Secured FELA Defense Verdict in Cook County, IL for a Major Rail Carrier Client

Successfully Defended a General Contractor at Arbitration Against a Condominium Association

Secured Settlement in Complex Case Involving Oil Refinery Processing and Financial and Consequential Damages Forensics

Avoided Costly Litigation in an Allegedly Defective Design and Construction Case

Won Counterclaim for Sign and Awning Contractor in Case Involving

Obtained Favorable Ruling Against Third-Party Provider

Obtained Summary Judgment on Behalf of Owner of Construction Project

Won Partial Summary Judgment on Complex Issues of Federal Preemption

Negotiated a Settlement Inclusive of a Licensing and Operating Agreement for a Dispute Between an Operator of Recreational Sporting Facilities and a Sports Technology Company

Membership & Involvement

- Member: Amundsen Davis Executive Committee
- Member: International Association of Defense Counsel, Construction Group; Associated General Contractors of America; American Subcontractors' Association; Attorney's Council; Northern Illinois Building Contractors' Association; DRI Construction Law Committee; Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association; Highway Work Zone Safety; MAASTRO Reg AASHTO-AGC-ARTBA Jt. Committee
- Former Co-Chair, Construction Law Committee: IDC
- Former Chair, Former Immediate Past Vice Chair: USLAW Network Construction Practice Group

Honors

- Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ rated
- Fellow, Construction Lawyers Society of America: 2025
- Selected to BTI Consulting Group Client Service All-Stars 2023
- Selected to the Illinois Super Lawyers list: 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2024, 2025

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- Selected to *The Best Lawyers in America*® in Construction Law: 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025
- Selected by the Leading Lawyers Network as a "Leading Lawyer" in construction law

Firm News

Congratulations to Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2025 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
Firm News, January 21, 2025

100 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Recognized by Best Lawyers® in 2025 in America
Firm News, August 15, 2024

Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included in the 2024 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars List
Firm News, January 25, 2024

82 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Recognized by Best Lawyers® in 2024 in America
Firm News, August 17, 2023

BTI Consulting Group Names Dennis Cotter on Client Service All-Stars 2023 List
Firm News, *BTI Consulting Group*, 2023

37 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Recognized by *Best Lawyers in America*© 2023
Firm News, August 18, 2022

29 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2022 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
January 28, 2022

29 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Recognized by *Best Lawyers in America*© 2022
Firm News, August 19, 2021

26 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2021 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
January 29, 2021

25 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Recognized in *Best Lawyers in America*© 2021
Firm News, August 20, 2020

23 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2020 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists
January 29, 2020

15 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Named to *Best Lawyers in America*© 2020
Firm News, August 15, 2019

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28 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2019 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists

Firm News, January 24, 2019

12 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included in Best Lawyers in America© 2019

Firm News, August 15, 2018

26 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2017 Illinois Super Lawyers and Rising Stars Lists

Firm News, January 13, 2017

27 Amundsen Davis Attorneys Included on 2016 Illinois Super Lawyers and 2016 Illinois Rising Stars Lists

Firm News, January 8, 2016

Illinois Super Lawyers & Illinois Rising Stars Names 25 Amundsen Davis Attorneys to 2015 List

Firm News, January 12, 2015

Dennis Cotter appointed by AGC of America to National Committees on Highway Work Zone Safety and MAASSTO Reg AASHTO-AGC-ARTBA Jt.

May 1, 2013

Illinois Super Lawyers & Illinois Rising Stars Names 19 Amundsen Davis Attorneys to 2013 List

January 3, 2013

Alerts

California Court Opens the Litigation Floodgate Re: COVID-19 Exposure in the Workplace

Speaking Engagements

Seventh Annual Complimentary Construction Industry Legal Power Seminar Event, Amundsen Davis; Webcast, January 20, 2022

Cyber Threat Actors Have their Eyes on the Construction Industry Event, Amundsen Davis; Webcast, November 16, 2021

2021 Artificial Intelligence in Construction Virtual Seminar DRI and Illinois Defense Counsel, Webcast, February 16, 2021

The Illinois Construction Industry Legal Power Seminar – Sixth Annual A Live Streamed Seminar Event, Amundsen Davis; Webcast, January 21, 2021

USLAW Network Virtual Worldwide Retreat: 2021 and Beyond USLAW Network, Webcast, September 30, 2020 - October 9, 2020

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Industry Experts Fireside Chat: Construction Law
Speaking Engagement, USLAW, October 7, 2020

COVID-19: What Illinois Contractors Must KNOW and DO NOW
Event, Amundsen Davis, Webcast, April 9, 2020

The Illinois Construction Industry Legal Power Seminar – Fifth Annual
Critical Legal Updates Impacting the Construction Industry: What You Need to
Know for 2020
Event, Amundsen Davis, Seminar; Oak Brook, IL, January 23, 2020

There's a Buzz in the Air
Drone Safety in Construction Seminar; Woodridge, IL 60517, September 26, 2019

There's a Buzz in the Air - Are You Ready? Drones in Construction: A Risk and
Liability Checklist
Construction Expo & Safety Conference; Oakbrook, IL, March 5, 2019

Critical Legal Updates Impacting the Construction Industry: *What You Need to
Know for 2019*
Amundsen Davis, Seminar; Oak Brook, IL, January 17, 2019

Critical Legal Updates Impacting the Construction Industry: What You Need to
Know for 2018
The Illinois Construction Industry Legal Power Seminar – Third Annual
Amundsen Davis, Seminar; Lombard, IL, January 17, 2018

Busting the Myth That a Jury Cannot Understand a Complex case
USLAW Network Construction Exchange, Columbus, OH, October 2, 2017

Checklist for the Intake of a New Construction Case
Seminar; XL Catlin Insurance/Sedgwick Claims; Naperville, IL, July 18, 2017

Top Ten Construction Contract Clauses to Know When Defending a Construction
Injury Case
Seminar; XL Catlin Insurance/Sedgwick Claims; Naperville, IL, July 18, 2017

Construction Law Power Seminar: Critical Legal Updates Impacting the
Construction Industry: What You Need to Know for 2017
Amundsen Davis, Seminar; Lombard, IL, January 24, 2017

Published Works

The Coming Maelstrom of Regulatory Compliance, Risk Management, and
Litigation Over the Hot-Button Toxic Chemicals
Publication, *USLAW Magazine*, Fall 2024

COVID Conundrum
The CLM Magazine, May 21, 2020

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State of Illinois Construction Compendium of Law
USLAW, 2018

Court Rules on Sufficient Control - To The Extent You Litigate Injury Construction
Claims in Illinois
The Construction Claims Magazine, October 27, 2017

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