

Sara

Counsel

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AUSTIN

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Sara Burgin uses her scientific background and more than 30 years of legal experience to assist clients with issues relating to water use, management and disposal. She advises on permitting, compliance and enforcement matters in association with onshore and offshore wastewater and storm water discharges; issues relating to surface water and ground water rights; water contracts; Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) plan requirements and applicability issues; Clean Water Act (CWA) jurisdiction; issues associated with public water systems at industrial facilities; and dredge and fill permit requirements.

In addition to her water experience, Sara has also counseled clients on industrial solid waste matters related to wastewater treatment facilities and recycling/reuse of treated wastewater and/or solids resulting from treatment.

Market sources describe Sara as “a guru,” “one of the top-quality water lawyers in the state” (*Chambers USA*, 2018) and “one of the top environment lawyers in the state” (*Chambers USA*, 2021).

Industries

[Energy](#)

Practices

[Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage](#)

[Environment, Lands and Resources](#)

[Incident Prevention & Response Litigation](#)

[Environmental Litigation](#)

[Environmental Litigation & Enforcement Defense](#)

[Natural Resource Protection](#)

[Environmental Permitting & Regulation](#)

Credentials

Education

- University of Law, London, J.D., 1982, *with honors*
- The Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University, M.S., 1977
- Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, B.A., 1973

Bar Admissions

- Texas

Chambers USA

- Texas Environment, 2004 – 2024

The Legal 500 United States

- Environment: Regulatory, 2016, 2019 – 2024
- Environment: Transactional, 2017
- Environment: Litigation, 2016, 2018

BL Rankings

- *Best Lawyers*, 1997 – 2025
- Austin Lawyer of the Year, Environmental, 2012
- Austin Lawyer of the Year, Water Law, 2013, 2016

Lawdragon Inc.

- *Lawdragon Green 500: Leaders in Environmental Law*, Environmental Law, Especially Water, 2024

Thomson Reuters

- *Texas Super Lawyers*, 2003 – 2020

Law Business Research Ltd.

- *Who's Who Legal*, Environment Global Leader, 2023

ALM Media Properties, LLC

- *Texas Lawyer*, Top Notch Lawyer in Environmental Law, 2007
- Go-To-Lawyer in Environmental Law, 2002

American City Business Journals

- *Austin Business Journal*, Best in Bar, 2003

Resources

EPA and Army Say they are Staying in the Comfort Zone with the Proposed Revision to the Definition of « Waters of the United States »

Update

Update on State of Texas NPDES Application to Issue Federal Discharge Permits for Oil and Gas Facilities

Blog Post

EPA Draft Guidance Memorandum on the Application of County of Maui

Blog Post

EPA Approved Texas NPDES Oil and Gas Program Authorization on January 15, 2021

Blog Post

Notice of EPA Approved Texas NPDES Oil and Gas Program Authorization Published in Federal Register on February 12, 2021

Blog Post

Sackett II Me: Breaking Down the Arguments in <i>Sackett v. EPA</i>

Podcast

Environmental Essentials Webinar Series – Updates on Waters of the United States

Video

Environmental Essentials Webinar Series – Sackett II/WOTUS IX: Implementation of the Supreme Court’s Interpretation of “Waters of the US” Under the Clean Water Act

Video

Clean Water Act: The Good, The Bad, and The Muddy

Video

Women in Environmental Law: Practical Advice You’ll Actually Use

Podcast

Navigable Waters Protection Rule Vacated—EPA & Corps to Treat Vacatur as Nationwide

Update

Biden Administration Finalizes Redefinition of « Waters of the United States »

Update

EPA's Proposal to Grant Class VI Primacy to Louisiana – Availability of Application Documents

Update

Texas UIC Class VI Update: Proposed Amendments to 16 TAC Ch. 5

Update

Publications & Speeches

- Co-author, "Avoiding criminal liability after a flood: Lessons from Hurricane Harvey," *Trends*, Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources of the American Bar Association, January/February 2018
- Co-presenter, "Environmental Law's Not Dead Yet: Optics Versus Reality in the New Administration's Regulatory Reform Project," Association of Corporate Counsel South/Central Texas Chapter, July 12, 2017
- Panelist, "Dawn of a New Energy Era? A Look Forward," Western System Power Pool Conference, April 19, 2017
- "Clean Water Act Section 316(b) and Endangered Species," *Annual Update on Texas Water Law & Endangered Species*, University of Houston Law Center Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Center, October 14, 2016
- "Surface Focus," *Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation's Conference on Water Acquisition and Management for Oil & Gas Development*, Houston, April 8, 2016
- "Waters of the U.S. Rule: Overview and Recent Challenges," *Austin Bar Association Environmental Law Section CLE*, October 1, 2015
- "Water Issues," *27th Annual Texas Environmental Superconference*, August 6-7, 2015
- "Update on Surface Water Related Litigation and EPA/TCEQ Activities Related to Temperature," *Texas/Louisiana Environmental, Health & Safety Seminar*, June 4, 2013
- "Corporate Water Management and the Endangered Species Act," *Global Environmental Management Initiative (GEMi)*, November 1, 2012
- "Water Use at Industrial Facilities: Current Issues," *Texas/Louisiana Environmental, Health & Safety Seminar*, June 1, 2012