

Linda E. Benfield

Partner

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Milwaukee

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“One of the most established and effective environmental lawyers in the state” according to *Chambers USA*, Linda E. Benfield has more than 38 years’ experience in all aspects of environmental law. She puts her extensive background to work for clients, counseling them on litigation and compliance issues related to air and water permitting, solid and hazardous waste handling and disposal, and PFAS and other emerging contaminants.

Honored multiple times as “Lawyer of the Year,” Linda has been recognized by her peers for her legal abilities, professionalism and integrity.

She advises clients on regulatory issues concerning the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, Superfund, mobile source, multimedia, and RCRA enforcement. She counsels clients on citizen suit litigation, settlement strategies and related cost recovery, insurance coverage, and indemnity disputes. Linda also advises clients regarding the variety of issues involved in the redevelopment, sale, or other transfer of contaminated properties.

Linda’s recent cases and administrative proceedings include representation of clients in U.S. EPA multimedia audits and related enforcement, the defense of numerous complaints by U.S. EPA or state environmental agencies alleging air emissions or “new source review” violations, and prosecution and defense of citizen suit actions and cost recovery actions in federal and state courts.

A member of the firm’s Management Committee and former chair (and current member) of the Environmental Regulation Practice, Linda is also a member of the firm’s Government Enforcement Defense & Investigations Practice and the Manufacturing Sector. She is a regular speaker on issues related to environmental enforcement, litigation, compliance, and transactions.

Awards and Recognition

- Lifetime Achievement Award – *Wisconsin Law Journal* (2025)
- Environmental Law Attorney Powerlist – *Wisconsin Law Journal* (2025)
- Stand-out Lawyer, *Thomson Reuters* (2025)
- Linda T. Mellowes Woman Leader of the Year – *United Way* (2024)
- Peer review rated as AV Preeminent®, the highest performance rating in Martindale-Hubbell® Peer Review Ratings™ system
- *The Best Lawyers in America*® – Environmental Law (1995, 2010 – 2024)
- *The Best Lawyers in America*® – Litigation – Environmental (2011 – 2024)
- *The Best Lawyers in America*® – Natural Resources Law (2012 – 2023)
- *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business* – Natural Resources & Environment (2010-2022, 2024-2025)
- *Wisconsin Super Lawyers*® – Environmental (2005-2016, 2021, and 2023)
- Client Service All Star Team – BTI Consulting Group (2016)
- *Best Lawyers*® – Milwaukee Environmental “Lawyer of the Year” (2010, 2013 and 2015)
- *Best Lawyers*® – Wisconsin Natural Resources “Lawyer of the Year” (2014)
- *Best Lawyers*® – Milwaukee Natural Resources “Lawyer of the Year” (2012)
- “Women of Influence” – *The Milwaukee Business Journal* (2014)
- International Who's Who of Environmental Lawyers (2011)
- “Women in the Law” – *Wisconsin Law Journal* (2009)
- “Top 25 Women Lawyers” – *Wisconsin Super Lawyers*® (2008)

Affiliations

- Attorneys' Liability Assurance Society Ltd. (ALAS) – Board Member (2015 – present)
- American College of Environmental Lawyers – Fellow
- Wisconsin Law Foundation – Fellow

Community Involvement

- United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County
 - Chair of the board (2020 – 2022)
 - Board member (2013 – present)
 - Campaign co-chair (2013)
- Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, board member (2019 – present)
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee, trustee (2016 – present)
- Building Brave, board member (2016 – 2022)
- Milwaukee Ballet – former chair of the board and board member

Sectors

- [Automotive](#)
- [Energy & Infrastructure](#)
- [Energy Transition](#)



FOLEY & LARDNER LLP

- Environmental & Product Stewardship
- Manufacturing
- Power & Renewables
- Racial Justice & Equity
- Supply Chain

Practice Areas

- Corporate
- Environmental
- Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)
- Government Enforcement Defense & Investigations

Education

- The University of Chicago School of Law (J.D., 1985)
- Colorado College (B.A., summa cum laude, 1981)

Admissions

- Wisconsin
- Colorado
- District of Columbia
- Numerous federal courts, including:
 - District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
 - Western District of Wisconsin