



Richard G. Morgan

PARTNER

MINNEAPOLIS, MN

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OVERVIEW

A trial attorney who has first chaired more than 50 trials, Rick defends clients in complex toxic tort litigation and catastrophic personal injury cases.

Rick primarily represents private companies—often those with a Fortune 500 ranking—in high-exposure toxic tort cases, including exposures allegedly resulting in death. He routinely handles complex multi-plaintiff and class action cases, and he has tried cases at bench and jury trials across the country, appearing in courthouses in more than 20 states. Rick's litigation practice focuses on defending industrial and institutional cleaning, sanitation, and hygiene matters, including programs relating to water management and infection prevention.

His practice also includes representation of clients in fire and explosion cases. These cases have included electrical fires on cruise ships, fires in industrial and commercial buildings, and refinery explosions. In addition, Rick represents insurers in toxic tort cases, and he has decades of experience defending mold and legionella litigation matters. He has handled mold exposure cases involving commercial real estate properties, educational institutions, multifamily housing, and military housing. He has served as national counsel for construction product manufacturers and a major military housing provider. Rick is also knowledgeable about benzene exposure matters, and he previously oversaw the benzene litigation program for a major multinational conglomerate. In addition, Rick regularly represents clients in general commercial litigation matters and other business disputes.

Industries

Manufacturing
Technology
Transportation

Services

Litigation & Alternative Dispute
Resolution
Product Liability
Toxic Tort

Rick thrives on the excitement and strategy of trial: his interest in law dates to observing attorneys at trial at a courthouse near his summer job as a teen, and he still finds his work to be just as much fun as it looked all those years ago. While many cases do settle, Rick is always prepared for trial—and motivated to intensely prepare by the possibility that he may find himself in court.

Acknowledged by his opponents as “one of the best cross-examiners” in practice, Rick regards litigation simply as storytelling. He knows that winning a case is a matter of first presenting a compelling narrative that relies on clearly-explained facts and science—along with performing the research necessary to discredit the opposition. Rick also understands the importance of humanizing both the client and the legal team: he calls on corporate witnesses who remind jurors of their friends and neighbors, and he assembles a diverse team so that juries hear the defense’s case from multiple perspectives.

Rick’s experience goes beyond the corporate world: a veteran and former active-duty JAG officer, Rick first cut his teeth in court as a prosecutor for the Army. He also served as an assistant U.S. attorney, prosecuting federal cases in Minnesota.

Known for his 100% commitment to his cases, Rick prioritizes client communication and ensures that clients have all the information necessary to make strategic decisions. Clients can have confidence that he is determined to achieve the best result possible whether through settlement, at trial, or on appeal.

Experience

- Served as first chair trial counsel in 50 cases. Has appeared on behalf of clients in courthouses in 20+ states and has defended matters for clients in 40+ states.
- Serves as national counsel for Ecolab Inc. on products liability and commercial matters.
- Served as national counsel for Balfour Beatty Communities on toxic tort matters.
- Served as national counsel for 3M and Cargill on toxic tort defense programs.
- Served as national trial counsel for Apple Computer on product liability matters involving claims of repetitive stress syndrome.
- Served as national trial counsel for Starkey Hearing Technologies on commercial and intellectual property matters.
- Served as national counsel for Capital Safety USA in products liability and intellectual property matters.

Experience

- Served as national counsel for H.B. Fuller Company on products liability and commercial matters involving several product lines. Has also represented Fuller in intellectual property matters.
- Defended class actions for H.B. Fuller Company and Ecolab Inc.
- Represented FDIC in investigating failed banks.
- Stepped in to recast trial strategy after a plaintiff's verdict was reversed and remanded for new trial in *Millenkamp v. Davisco Foods*.
- Represented Ecolab in highly publicized wrongful death case in Texas nursing home (*Smother v. Ecolab*).
- Represented Ecolab in Arkansas case brought by 22-year old man blinded while using chemicals (*Williams v. Ecolab*).
- Stepped in for retrial of commercial matter remanded after plaintiff's verdict (*Gamma-10 Plastics v. American President Lines*).

Recognition

- Best Lawyers in Minnesota, 2021
- *The Best Lawyers In America*®
 - Product Liability Litigation - Defendants, 2021–2025
- Minnesota Super Lawyers, 2007–2013, 2015–2018
- Who's Who Legal: International Who's Who of Product Liability Defense Lawyers
- Benchmark Litigation Local Litigation Star, Product Liability, Minnesota, 2015
- BTI Consulting Client Service All-Star

Education

- J.D., University of Minnesota Law School
 - *cum laude*
- M.A., University of Minnesota, Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs
- B.A., Cornell University
 - with distinction

Admissions

- Minnesota
- New York
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Arkansas
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Arkansas
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Michigan
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York
- U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

Community Leadership

Rick has served on the board of Urban Impact Ministries for decades and has supported the organization since its 1991 founding. The gospel-centered ministry provides educational opportunities, tutoring, and after-school and summer programs for kids and teens in underserved areas of New Orleans.

A former board member for the Center of the American Experiment, a Minnesota-based think tank that advocates for free-market principles, Rick also values opportunities to participate in Minnesota public affairs. He has advised businesses, non-profits, and political candidates on campaign finance and election law.



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