

## PRACTICE CONTACT

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# UTICA/MARCELLUS SHALES

With decades of experience representing clients in oil and gas exploration, Vorys is well-positioned to provide legal counsel to those clients pursuing development of the Utica and Marcellus shales. Vorys has represented key players in the ongoing exploration of the Utica and Marcellus, including producers, pipeline companies, and drilling and services companies. Our attorneys are also leaders in the field; case in point, five of our partners have served as chair of the Ohio State Bar Association's Natural Resources Law Committee.

Our attorneys understand the complexities associated with horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing because they have counseled clients in each stage of the exploration process. With offices in Columbus, Cleveland, and Akron, Ohio, as well as Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Vorys is located in the heart of the shale, which spans eastern Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and New York.

Vorys advises its clients on all types of transactional work, from simple leasing and well-field service contracts to sophisticated joint venture and asset transactions, financing agreements and hedging programs. Our firm frequently represents clients in energy disputes before state and federal courts and arbitration panels, including those involving gas purchase and sales contracts, lease and joint operating agreements, bankruptcies and class-action royalty litigation. Additionally, our energy lawyers regularly represent clients before state permitting agencies and public utilities commissions, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Ohio and U.S. Environmental Protection Agencies. Vorys attorneys have also advised energy businesses on tax issues that arise from oil and gas exploration.

### **Other relevant experience includes:**

- Representing numerous clients in state and federal regulatory proceedings in connection with gas market agreements and disputes
- Reaching a successful settlement on behalf of a major Marcellus Shale producer making uniform the leases of more than 25,000 landowners
- A Vorys attorney serving as official observer of the review done by STRONGER, Inc. a non-profit organization that reviewed Ohio's regulatory program that monitors hydraulic fracturing
- Vorys lawyers serving the industry in various capacities for energy trade associations and legal foundations, including past and present officers and Board of Trustee members of the Ohio Oil and Gas Association, the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation, the Energy & Mineral Law Foundation and the Ohio State Bar Association's Natural Resources Law Committee

With more than 20 years of experience advising producers and pipeline operators in Ohio, Gregory Russell serves as the chair of the Ohio Oil and Gas Association's Environmental Committee and recently stepped down as the chair of the Ohio State Bar Association's Natural Resources Law Committee. A frequent speaker on natural gas industry topics, including environmental, regulatory and natural gas market issues, Greg was also part of the stakeholder workgroup that developed hydraulic fracturing guidelines used by STRONGER, Inc., and its stakeholder review teams in evaluating state oil and gas environmental

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regulatory programs.

Sheila Nolan Gartland, a partner in the Vorys Columbus office, represents clients in the energy sector in connection with oil and gas transactions (acquisitions, dispositions, financing, joint ventures, title matters and leasing) and financings of energy projects. She also manages and works in the firm's oil and gas title opinion practice, which focuses primarily on properties located in the Utica shale play. Sheila's experience also includes advising clients on real property issues relating to environmental remediation compliance and bankruptcy proceedings; and representing one of Ohio's largest oil and gas producers in a multimillion-dollar joint venture for the exploration and production of oil and natural gas.

Mike Settineri, a partner in the Vorys Columbus office, regularly advises clients in utility and energy matters, including litigation before the Ohio Power Siting Board, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio and the Ohio Oil and Gas Commission. He also represents clients on midstream pipeline and natural gas processing projects including permitting and regulatory matters, plant electric service and road use maintenance agreements. In addition to Mike's regulatory and litigation practice, he regularly advises clients on transactions for the supply of electric generation service from the competitive generation supply market including generation supply from renewable energy resources. He has spoken at seminars on various topics relating to mineral interest conflicts, road use maintenance agreements, gas gathering and processing agreements, oil and gas permit appeals, and induced seismicity.