



Mass Tort & Catastrophic Loss

PRACTICES

OVERVIEW

Mass tort claims involving catastrophic personal injury, loss of life, or property damage can threaten the very existence of a company and require experienced and immediate legal assistance. Smith Anderson's trial lawyers have the expertise to help protect a company in the face of such events and will formulate comprehensive investigation and defense strategies for individual claims, class actions, and/or multi-district (MDL) or aggregated claims litigation in North Carolina and other jurisdictions nationwide.

Attorneys in our Mass Tort and Catastrophic Loss practice have deep experience in high-stakes mass tort litigation involving plant explosions, fires, plane crashes, water and land contamination, toxic tort claims, asbestos and benzene, structural collapses, and other areas of catastrophic loss, which often depend on highly technical engineering and scientific evidence. We work with the nation's top experts on engineering, scientific and technical issues and coordinate clients' initial emergency response plans, government agency investigation coordination and response, evidence preservation and public relations strategies. We have defended regional, national and multinational companies, as well as insurance carriers nationwide, in product liability and negligence-based claims involving catastrophic events. Our team serves as lead and managing counsel for our clients' mass tort matters and has successfully represented our clients' interests in scores of trials in state and federal courts, trying numerous cases to verdict.

We also hold leadership roles in industry and professional litigation groups such as the Product Liability Advisory Council, International Association of Defense Counsel, Defense Research Institute, North Carolina Association of Defense Attorneys and the American Board of Trial Advocates and are among North Carolina's most experienced trial lawyers. Additionally, we are recognized by top ranking publications such as *Benchmark Litigation*, *Best Lawyers in America*®, *Business North Carolina's* Legal Elite and *North Carolina Super Lawyers*.

SERVICES

- Fire and Arson
- Explosion
- Asbestos and Toxic Torts
- Aviation
- Class Action, Multi-district and Aggregated Claims
- Construction and Building Collapse
- Environmental
- Premises Liability
- Products Liability

- Property Damage
- Preventive counseling and advice
- Crisis Response and Investigation
- Government Agency Investigation coordination and response
- Military Defense Contractor
- Public Utility
- Pharmaceutical/Vaccines
- Medical Device

EXPERIENCE

- Blackwater Security Fallujah Ambush: Defense of a major security contractor regarding deaths of four independent contractors ambushed and killed on convoy in Fallujah, Iraq with national scope and implications and Congressional interest. This complex case involved federal and state lawsuits, Department of Labor and International Centre for Dispute Resolution proceedings, Congressional Sub-Committee hearings and multiple federal appeals in the United States Fourth Circuit and the Supreme Court.
- Hamlet Chicken Plant Fire: Defense of a manufacturer of industrial chicken fryer from catastrophic fire loss in chicken processing plant in Hamlet, NC resulting in twenty-four deaths and aggressive litigation.
- Weyerhaeuser Chemical Pulp Silo Rupture: Defense of an engineering and manufacturing company from multiple death lawsuits from rupture of hydrochloric acid pulp silo at a major paper mill in North Carolina.
- International Paper Boiler Explosion: Defense of paper manufacturer from multiple deaths and injuries from major plant boiler explosion.
- Hendrick Motorsports King Air Aircraft Crash: Defense of a racing corporation for deaths following corporate plane crash.
- ConAgra Plant Explosion: Defense of a gas regulator manufacturer in aggregated lawsuits involving four deaths and over forty workers injured in a catastrophic propane gas fire and explosion at a manufacturing facility.

PROFESSIONALS

Christopher R. Kiger

Addie K. S. Ries

Kirk G. Warner

J. Mitchell Armbruster



Clifton L. Brinson

Peter J. Marino

Chase Parker

RELATED AREAS

Asbestos and Toxic Torts

Construction & Infrastructure

Environmental

Product Liability

