



## John W. Bridger

Of Counsel

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Houston, TX

John Bridger handles a wide variety of civil and maritime litigation, including tort and commercial disputes, and has tried more than 70 cases to verdict. John frequently defends personal injury, transportation and property damage claims typically occurring on or at chemical plants, refineries, fabrication shops, docks, marine terminals, vessels, offshore oil rigs and platforms, and construction sites. These cases usually involve claims of negligence, gross negligence, personal injury, premises liability, products liability, maritime law, toxic tort, appellate law, and contribution and indemnity.

John also handles a variety of commercial and contractual matters, including claims arising from breach of contract, insurance and indemnity disputes, and maritime bunkers sales.

### **Maritime Law**

John has represented vessels, offshore drilling contractors, terminals, and a major independent marine fuel supplier in personal injury and commercial maritime cases under Jones Act, LHWCA and general maritime law. Acting as lead counsel, John successfully prosecuted at trial in Beaumont federal court (and held on appeal) a marine terminal lost profit claim in an Oil Pollution Act matter.

### **Transportation**

John has handled cases involving serious personal injury and death claims arising from the loading and operation of cars, vans, trucks, and tractor-trailers. Among other cases tried, John successfully represented a transportation company and its driver, obtaining a defense verdict in a wrongful death claim arising from the tractor-trailer colliding with an oncoming vehicle.

### **Products Liability**

In the area of products liability, John has represented manufacturers of cranes, man lifts,

### **Services**

- Admiralty & Marine
- Asbestos & Talc
- Complex Tort & General Casualty
- Product Liability, Prevention & Government Compliance
- Transportation
- National Trial Team

valve actuators, paper mill equipment, plastic gas cans, bicycles, steel plate, cluster bombs, tires, welding equipment and tire rims.

### **Toxic Tort Litigation**

John has handled toxic tort cases involving, among others, nickel, chromium, hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide, zirconium, asbestos and silica. In a Gulf War Syndrome case (putative class action), he obtained dismissal of a manufacturer that had pled guilty in a companion criminal case, based on a motion for summary judgment that, in part, invoked international treaties defining biochemical weapons.

### **Education**

- University of Texas School of Law (J.D., 1985)
  - with honors
- Baylor University (B.A., 1982)
  - magna cum laude

### **Bar Admissions**

- Texas

### **Court Admissions**

- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas

### **Professional Affiliations**

- Texas Association of Defense Counsel
- College of the State Bar of Texas
- Houston Bar Association
- Jefferson County Bar Association

### **Awards & Honors**

- Selected for inclusion in *The Best Lawyers in America*®, 2024-2026
- Selected for inclusion in Texas Super Lawyers®, 2024
- Selected for inclusion in The Legal 500 United States in Shipping Litigation & Regulation Tier 3, 2023-2024
- American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA)

- ABOTA Advocate
- Rated AV® Preeminent™ by Martindale-Hubbell
- AVVO “Superb” Rating
- The Best Lawyers in America®: Commercial Litigation (2017–2023); Personal Injury Litigation – Defendants (2012–2021); Mass Tort Litigation/Class Actions – Defendants (2020–2021); Product Liability Litigation – Defendants (2021)
- “Houston’s Top Lawyers,” H Texas Magazine, 2007-2008, 2011–present
- Texas Super Lawyers, a Thomson Reuters® service, 2004–2022

## Representative Matters

### Maritime Law

As lead counsel, successfully defended (to defense verdict) maintenance and cure case in Jefferson County.

Represented vessels, offshore drilling contractors, terminals and a major independent marine fuel supplier in personal injury and commercial maritime cases under Jones Act, LHWCA and general maritime law.

As co-counsel, successfully defended (and held on appeal), in Beaumont (Jefferson County), Jones Act employer from gross negligence allegations in an unseaworthiness case (one of the first post-*Miles* cases to so hold).

In maritime collision case involving 450 plaintiffs claiming exposure to chemicals released as a result of the collision, successfully obtained, in Galveston, summary judgment on duty for shipowner.

In maritime wrongful death case, successfully obtained, in Beaumont, Jefferson County, summary judgment on duty for terminal.

As lead counsel, successfully prosecuted at trial in Beaumont federal court (and held on appeal) marine terminal lost profit claim in Oil Pollution Act claim.

### Toxic Tort Litigation

As lead trial counsel, successfully defended (unanimous defense verdict) in Beaumont, Jefferson County a major oil company in hydrogen sulfide exposure cases resulting from injection well explosion and resulting in alleged brain damage to plaintiff.

Handled toxic tort cases involving, among others, nickel, chromium, hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide, zirconium, asbestos and silica.

As lead trial counsel, successfully defended (unanimous defense verdict in Galveston) 16 specialty steel producers and suppliers in nickel and hexavalent chromium inhalation case involving heart and lung injuries with past medical bills exceeding \$1 million.

As trial counsel, successfully defended at trial on appeal (defense verdict in all but two claimants, with those two reversed on appeal to Fifth Circuit) asbestos supplier in *Cimino* class action trial in Beaumont federal court.

As trial counsel, successfully defended (to defense verdict) asbestos product manufacturer in consolidated action in Orange, class action in Beaumont, and consolidated and individual action in Philadelphia.

In Gulf War Syndrome case (putative class action), successfully obtained, in Brazoria County, dismissal of manufacturer that had pled guilty in companion criminal case, based on motion for summary judgment that, in part, invoked international treaties defining biochemical weapons.

### **Products Liability**

Texas counsel for several product defendants in asbestos litigation.

Successfully prosecuted *Daubert* challenges to medical and liability expert witnesses resulting in their exclusion.

As lead trial counsel, successfully defended (to unanimous defense verdict), in federal court in Houston, a major retailer against claims that a defective bicycle caused an accident resulting in hip replacement.

As co-counsel, successfully defended to a defense verdict, in federal court in Marshall, a gas can manufacturer in a burn death case.

### **Personal Injury Defense**

As lead trial counsel, successfully defended (defense verdict), in Orange, a local water supply company in brain damage case.

As lead trial counsel, successfully defended (defense verdict) in Kountze, Hardin County, a trucking company in wrongful death suit.

As lead trial counsel, successfully defended (to unanimous defense verdict) at trial in Houston federal court, major retailer in fall resulting in hip replacement.

### **Premises Liability**

Defended major oil companies, petrochemical companies and public housing authorities in premises liability.