

James C.T. Hardwick

Of Counsel

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Jim Hardwick has been with the firm since 1967. His practice focuses solely in Oil & Gas Law, with expertise in Partnership/Unincorporated Entity Law and Federal & State Energy Regulatory Law. Before joining Hall Estill, Jim served as an attorney with Sun Oil Company, Mid-Continent Division, from 1964 to 1967. He has an individual AV Preeminent rating through Martindale-Hubbell.

He was a member of the Board of Editors, Oklahoma Law Review; and is a past Trustee and a past member of the Executive Committee of the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation (now the Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law). Jim is also the Oklahoma reporter for that Foundation's Mineral Law Newsletter and is a Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board of the Institute for Energy Law of The Center for American and International Law (formerly The Southwestern Legal Foundation). Additionally, he served as one of the seven members of the AAPL appointed working committee which revised the Model Form Operating Agreement and resulted in the AAPL Model Form Operating Agreement-1989. Finally, he is a frequent speaker on oil and gas law issues, including at the 2010 Institute for Energy Law's Short Course on the Law of Shale Gas Plays.

Jim's practice includes:

- All phases of exploration and production activities (on-shore and off-shore) including preparation, drafting, review, interpretation and analysis of, and advice and representation concerning, farmout agreements, exploration agreements, participation agreements, operating agreements, joint venture agreements, gas plant C&O agreements, gas processing agreements, gathering agreements, gas purchase and sale agreements, conveyancing documents, agreements for the purchase and sale of producing properties, stock purchase and sale agreements, merger agreements for oil and gas and related entities, and field-wide unitization agreements.

- Advice and analysis on state oil and gas conservation issues and producer issues under the Natural Gas Act and Natural Gas Policy Act; appearance before regulatory agencies, including spacing, pooling, and field-wide unitization matters before the Oklahoma Corporation Commission and before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in producer-pipeline dispute.
- Advice and representation in royalty payment and royalty valuation matters, split stream sale and gas balancing matters, federal and Indian leasing, communitization and operational matters, and federal and Indian royalty valuation, including administrative appeals regarding same.
- Litigation concerning all types of exploration and production activities, including contract disputes, landowner disputes, gas purchase contract disputes, operating agreement disputes, royalty owner disputes and post-production cost litigation and defense of royalty owner class actions.
- Representation of gatherers, including drafting, review and interpretation of agreements for purchase and sale of gathering systems and gathering agreements and advice on regulation of gathering activities, including representation of clients in connection with Governor's Task Force in 1999 in drafting and compromise of current gathering legislation in Oklahoma.
- Secured financing, including representation of oil and gas producers, gatherers and pipelines and non-oil and gas entities as well in review and drafting of mortgages, security agreements and credit and related documents and perfection of security both under real estate law and UCC Article 9.
- Partnership and unincorporated entities, including review and drafting of partnership agreements, limited partnership agreements, limited liability company documents and advice regarding unincorporated entities.

Practices

Corporate & Business Services

- Mergers, Acquisitions & Divestitures

Oil & Gas

- Pipeline and Facilities Construction & Operation
- Water Law

Education

- University of Oklahoma College of Law (LL.B., 1963)
- University of Oklahoma (B.S. in Petroleum Engineering, *with distinction*, 1960)

Admissions

- Oklahoma (1963)
- Oklahoma Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma

- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit

Experience

- 1967 - Present Hall Estill
- 1964 - 1967 Attorney with Sun Oil Company, Mid-Continent Division

Honors & Awards

- Recognized as Best Lawyers' Tulsa Lawyer of the Year in Natural Resources Law and Oil and Gas Law in 2025
- Recognized as Best Lawyers' Tulsa Lawyer of the Year in Natural Resources Law in 2011 and 2014
- Recognized as a Best Lawyer in America in Commercial Litigation, Natural Resources and Oil & Gas Law
- Recognized as a Super Lawyer in Oklahoma in Energy & Natural Resources Law
- Recognized as a Top 50 attorney in Oklahoma in 2006 by Super Lawyers
- Recipient of the 2004 Eugene Kuntz Award for Leadership in Natural Resources Law and Policy, presented by the University of Oklahoma College of Law and the Oklahoma Bar Association Mineral Law Section
- Recognized as a Band 1 attorney in Energy & Natural Resources Law by Chambers USA

Community & Professional Involvement

- American Bar Association
- Oklahoma Bar Association
- Tulsa County Bar Association
- Former Member, Board of Editors, Oklahoma Law Review
- Oklahoma Reporter, "Mineral Law Newsletter," Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation, 1984 - present
- Past Trustee and Past Executive Committee Member, Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation (now the Foundation for Natural Resources and Energy Law)
- Executive Committee Vice-Chair of the Advisory Board of the Institute for Energy Law of The Center for American and International Law
- AAPL Committee on Revision of Form 610 Joint Operating Agreement, 1986-1989

Articles & Presentations

- “Price Adjustments and Cost Reimbursements Under Section 110 of the NGPA” presented at conferences sponsored by Executive Enterprises, Inc. in 1980, 1981 and 1982;
- “Producer Gas Sale Contracts After The Natural Gas Policy Act” at the 20th Annual Arkansas Natural Resources Law Institute (February 1981);

- “The 1982 Model Form Operating Agreement: Changes And Continuing Concerns” presented at a Special Institute On Oil And Gas Agreements sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation (May 1983);
- Author, “Exhibits To The Operating Agreement” at the 10th Annual Oil, Gas & Mineral Law Institute sponsored by the University of Texas School of Law and the Oil, Gas & Mineral Law Section of the State Bar of Texas (March 1984);
- Author, “Decontrol And Certain Other Federal Regulatory Considerations In Marketing of Gas” at an institute on Natural Gas Law?Marketing And Production In Oklahoma sponsored by Oklahoma City University School of Law (April 1985);
- Operational Agreements In The Shadow of Bankruptcy
- Author, “Proposed Revisions To AAPL 610 Operating Agreement” at the Southwestern Legal Foundation’s 39th Annual Institute on Oil and Gas Law and Taxation (February 1988);
- Author, “Current and Potential Issues in Gas Litigation” at the Southwestern Legal Foundation’s 40th Annual Institute (February 1989);
- Author, "Gas Royalty Issues Arising from Direct Gas Marketing," 43 Oil & Gas Institute, ch. 11, Southwest Legal Foundation (Matthew Bender 1992)
- Author, "Gas Marketing Royalty Issues in the 1990s," Special Institute on Oil & Gas Royalties on Non-Federal Lands (Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation, 1993)
- Author, "Indian Units and Indian Communitization Agreements," Special Institute on Onshore Pooling and Unitization (Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation, 1997)
- Author, "Response and Comment: Some Musings on Fiduciary Duties and Oil and Gas Relationships," presented at the Special Institute for the 50th Anniversary of the Southwestern Legal Foundation, published in 50th Oil & Gas Institute, Ch. 4A, Appendix (Matthew Bender 1999)
- Author, "Something Old, Something New - Current Issues Under the Joint Operating Agreement," presented at the Southwestern Legal Foundation's 51st Annual Institute (February 2000)
- Author, "Private Landowner Royalties on Oil - Theory and Reality," Special Institute on Private Oil & Gas Royalties (Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation 2003)
- Author, "Market Value Royalties - Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," presented at the Energy & Mineral Law 25th Annual Institute, Hot Springs, VA (May 2004)
- Panel Member, "Comparison of Litigation Trends and Strategies in States with Shale Plays," Fort Worth, TX (June 2010)
- Author, "Transferability of the Right to Operate," published in the Section Report of the Oil, Gas & Energy Resources Law of the State Bar of Texas, Vol.35, No. 1 (September 2010)