CHRISTOPHER E. HIRST*

PARTNER

* Unlimited Liability Corporation

BIOGRAPHY

Chris Hirst is a Partner and the leader of the firm's Construction + Engineering Practice. Chris is also a member of the firm's Environmental, Insurance and Maritime Practices.

Chris assists construction industry clients in the management of procurement issues, the negotiation and drafting of contracts, and the resolution of builders' liens and other construction-based litigation. His construction experience includes a very active professional liability practice and Chris defends design professionals in a wide range of error and omissions claims and disciplinary proceedings.

In addition to his construction practice, Chris provides environmental advice and litigation services to a broad range of clients including a major Canadian oil company, various construction industry participants, as well as maritime clients.

Chris has represented clients at all levels of the court in British Columbia as well as in the Northwest Territories, Alberta, and Ontario. He is also regularly involved in alternative dispute resolution and has extensive experience in resolving multi-party disputes through mediation and negotiation.

Chris is a frequent speaker and writer on legal issues of interest to the construction and business communities. He is the co-author of the "Annotated Builders Lien Act, 2007 – 2008" (3rd ed) published by the *Continuing Legal Education Society of British Columbia* (CLEBC) and a contributing author to the "Builders Lien Practice Manual" also published by the *CLEBC*.

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EDUCATION

- 1995 LL.B. University of Alberta
- 1990 B.A. University of British Columbia

BAR ADMISSIONS

- 1996 Admitted to the British Columbia Bar

PRACTICE AREAS

BUSINESS

- Construction + Engineering
- Environmental
- Maritime

INSURANCE

- Construction + Engineering
- Environmental
- Professional Liability

Chris is also the firm's former Managing Partner having acted in the role for two terms, from 2019 until 2024.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

Away from the office, Chris prefers to be skiing with his wife and two adult daughters. He is also an avid cycler, a mediocre, albeit enthusiastic, golfer and a CrossFit enthusiast.

RECOGNITION

- 2020 – 2027 Best Lawyers® in Canada Construction Law and the 2023 Best Lawyers® in Canada Construction Law, Vancouver "Lawyer of the Year"
- 2015 – 2026 Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory consistently recommended in the area of Construction Law
- 2019 – 2026 Benchmark Canada Litigation Star, Insurance, Construction, Environmental, and Commercial Law
- 2020 – 2026 Lexpert® Special Edition: Infrastructure, recognized.
- 2025 – 2026 Chambers Canada Guide recognized for Insurance: Dispute Resolution (Nationwide-Canada) in Band 4

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Counsel for a forestry company on a $100 million mill upgrade
- Counsel for a general contractor in a $300 million hotel and residence project in downtown Vancouver
- Counsel for the owner in a $250 million office tower project in downtown Vancouver
- Fairness Advisor for a First Nations civil works project
- Counsel for a dredging contractor in a *Fisheries Act* prosecution
- Counsel for the owner of a coal terminal in the prosecution of a $50 million claim arising from the destruction of a trestle bridge by a bulk freighter
- Counsel for a provincial health authority in relation to various development projects

- Maritime

INDUSTRIES

- Construction
- Environmental

- Counsel for the developer of a luxury $60 million high rise development in Yaletown
- Counsel for a syndicate of gas companies in a subrogated action arising from the failure of a major gas pipeline crossing the Peace River
- Geotechnical claims with respect to shoring designs, swelling clays, collapsing silts, earth filled dams, retaining walls, earth retention systems, and foundation performance
- Mechanical claims with respect to geothermal systems, sprinkler deficiencies, potable water systems, and HVAC performance
- Structural claims with respect to post tensioning, seismic deficiencies, bridges, creep deflection, and failed slabs
- Environmental claims with respect to the investigation and remediation of contaminated sites

PUBLICATIONS

Recent conference presentations include:

- May 28, 2026, “Risk Education Series: Professional Insurance Liability & Rectification Coverage”, *Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance*, Presenter
- October 30, 2025, “Navigating the Pitfalls: Problematic Contract Clauses and Key Legal Updates, *Victor Canada,* Panel Speaker
- June 18, 2024, “Tendering Fundamentals”, *CLEBC*, Speaker
- February 15, 2022, “Builders Liens – Fundamentals & Advanced Issues“, The Osgoode Certificate in Construction Law – National Edition, Speaker
- October 28, 2020, “Builders’ Liens Update 2020“, *CLEBC,* Speaker
- June 18, 2018, “Builders Liens – Practical Tips and Pitfalls”, *AHBL Lunch n’ Learn Seminar,* Speaker
- February 2018, “Civil Litigation Basics”, *CLEBC*, Speaker
- October 25, 2017, “Fundamentals of Tendering”, *CLEBC*, Speaker
- February 9, 2012, “Builders Liens – The Fundamentals”, *Buildex Vancouver*, Speaker
- February 24, 2011, “Tendering Law After Tercon”, *Buildex Vancouver*, Speaker
- March 22, 2011, “Tendering Law After Tercon”, *Buildex Edmonton*,

Speaker

- November 4, 2010, “Procurement Fundamentals & Solutions”, *Buildex Calgary*, Speaker
- April 21, 2010, “Understanding Builders Liens”, *Buildex Vancouver*, Speaker
- March 2009, “Tendering Fundamentals”, *CLEBC*, Speaker
- February 2009, “Understanding Construction Claims”, *Buildex Vancouver*, Speaker
- November 2008, “Construction Documents: Not the Same Old Thing!”, *Lorman Education Seminars*, Speaker
- September 2008, “Procurement Fundamentals”, *Glazing Contractors Association of BC*, Speaker
- February 2008, “Procurement Fundamentals and Solutions, Does One Size Fit All?”, *Buildex Vancouver*, Speaker
- February 2007, “The Law of Tendering in 2007”, *Buildex Vancouver*, Speaker
- February 2006, “Construction Law Update for Architects, Builders, Contractors and Engineers”, *Buildex Vancouver*, Speaker
- November 2005, *Construct Alberta*, Speaker
- February 2005, “Rule 18A Update 2005”, *CLEBC*, Speaker

Chris is a prolific writer on construction-related legal issues. Recent articles include:

- June 15, 2026, “The new and improved CCDC 5B 2025“, *Construction Business*, Co-Author
- March 4, 2026, “Contractors face higher risk on projects“, *Construction Business*, Co-Author
- December 9, 2025, “BC’s Long Awaited Prompt Payment Reforms Land Amid Industry Downturn“, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- October 16, 2025, “Professional Services Contract Drafting Tips“, *Construction Business*, Co-Author
- July 8, 2025, “Construction Challenges in 2025“, *Construction Business*, Co-Author
- April 4, 2025, “B.C. builders face tariff turmoil“, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author

- March 22, 2025, "Construction claims can be derailed by 'grumbling' emails", *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- November 25, 2024, "Why commercial owners should pay attention to notices of interest", *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- October 29, 2024, "Home warranty insurance no panacea for B.C. owners", *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- June 3, 2024, "Downing Tools: Powerful but Risky", *Construction Business*, Co-Author
- April 12, 2024, "What B.C. construction firms need to know about Forced Labour Act", *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- January 26, 2023, "It's time to prepare for the worst to protect against a downturn, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- August 8, 2022, "Navigating the escalation storm," *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- April 14, 2022, "Three energy-compliance paths for projects three storeys or under," *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- March 2022, "*0694841 B.C. Ltd. v. Alara Environmental Health and Safety Limited*, 2022 BCCA 67", Counsel Commentary, *Take Five Newsletter OnPoint Law Corp*, Page 15, Co-Author
- January 21, 2022, "What contractors and owners need to know about changes to the industry-standard contract", *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- October 14, 2021, "Legal Specs: The hidden pitfalls of reference clauses in trade contracts", *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- April 16, 2021, "Mandatory vaccination may not be an option for construction employers", *Business in Vancouver*, Co-Author
- January 18, 2021, "Employers should be aware of their duty to accommodate employees", *Business in Vancouver,* Co-Author
- May 1, 2020, "Construction companies should check contracts, insurance for relief from potential pandemic losses", *Business in Vancouver,* Co-Author
- Construction Law and Builders Liens, *Quickscribe Services Ltd.*, Expert Legal Annotator (ongoing)
- January 13, 2020, "Quantum of delay: proving a delay claim is more complex than it may seem", *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu

- October 7, 2019, “B.C. Lags Behind in Push for Prompt Payment on Construction Projects”, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 9, 2019, “The Legal Risks of Green Innovation in Design and Construction”, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 9, 2019, “Courts Guard Holdback Obligations of Builders Lien Act”, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 15, 2019, “Talent retention, speed to AI adoption are top challenges for new Alexander Holburn managing partner”, *Canadian Lawyer Magazine*, Quoted
- January 9, 2019, “Integrated project delivery emphasizes collaboration and mutual benefit”, *Business in Vancouver,* Co-author Norm Streu
- October 2018, “’Clear and precise’ language a must in pay-when-paid clauses”, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- Summer 2018, “Contractors may have a duty to inform trades of project bonds”, *Roofing BC*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 10, 2018, “Prompt-payment legislation overdue in British Columbia”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 10, 2018, “Contractors may have a duty to inform trades of project bonds”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 9, 2018, “Does arbitration deliver?”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- October 10, 2017, “Missing the wood for the trees”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 11, 2017, “Clearing the air around air space rights”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 11, 2017, “Court to weigh in on notice of labour and material bonds”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 10, 2017, “Penalty clauses and breach of contract”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- October 11, 2016, “The builders lien trust and bankruptcy”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 12, 2016, “Pay-if-paid clauses can carry unreasonable risks”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 12, 2016, “How to navigate the subtleties of contract warranties”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu

- October 13, 2015, “Tower cranes can be a source of dispute with neighbours”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 14, 2015, “Cash holdbacks are subject to release rules”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 13, 2015, “SCC decision on contract law a major game-changer for companies”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 14, 2014, “Sweeping changes to Temporary Foreign Worker Program hit employers”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 14, 2014, “Understanding risks in warranties is crucial before signing any contract”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 9, 2013, “Good paper trail can derail legal claim”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 9, 2013, “Supreme Court of Canada provides guidance on limited clauses”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 8 – 14, 2013, “Five paths that lead to possible LEEDigation”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- October 9 – 15, 2012, “Strategies mitigate risks”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 10 – 16, 2012, “British Columbia introduces Bill 34 (New Limitation Act)”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 10 – 16, 2012, “Understanding Builders Liens”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- February 6, 2012, “Why 45 days are important in the Builders Lien Act”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 10 – 16, 2012, “Contracts: 10 Things to Keep in Mind”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- November 30, 2011, “Looking at lien rights and land improvements”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- November 9, 2011, “Quotes in a bid can carry legal obligations”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- October 10, 2011, “Admiral Roofing decision”, *VRCA, Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 12, 2011, “Construction Disputes”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu

- April 12-18, 2011, “Construction Claims”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- February 21, 2011, “A primer on tendering law in Canada after Tercon”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- February 2, 2011, “Limiting corporate liability”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 24, 2011, “Make sure you get a lien certificate of completion right”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 11 – 17, 2011, “Supreme Court ruling on insurance protection impacts both builders and customers”, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- December 1, 2010, “Supreme Court Rules on Commercial General Liability”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- October 12 – 18, 2010, “Geotechnical soil settlement issues”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 13 – 19, 2010, “Project Tips”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 20 – 26, 2010, “Supreme Court Decision: Tercon v. MoTH”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver,* Co-author Norm Streu
- April 19, 2010, “10 Things Contractors Should Know About Trusts”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- January 12 – 18, 2010, “What is the future for law of tender in Canada”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver,* Co-author Norm Streu
- October 13 – 19, 2009, “How do you get a Builders Lien removed”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- June 25, 2009, “Legal Reinforcement: Insurer victorious in latest liability coverage battle”, *Journal of Commerce,* Co-author Norm Streu
- May 4, 2009, “Legal Reinforcement: Proving damages can be difficult”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July 21 – 27, 2009, “Is it time to Rethink Risk-allocation Model”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 21 – 27, 2009, “Exclusion Clauses & Tendering Authorities”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- February 9, 2009, “Legal Reinforcement: Understanding the construction claims process”, *Journal of Commerce,* Co-author Norm Streu

- January 13 – 19, 2009, “Bonds are back – what is a personal indemnity?”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- December 8, 2008, “Point Counter Point: Determining the price of the work”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- October 20, 2008, “Point Counter Point: A good guide for where not to lien”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- September 30 – October 6, 2008, “Is a Request for Proposal (RFP) a solution to the legal pitfalls of the tendering process?”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver,* Author
- August 27, 2008, “Point Counter Point: Warm summer days and legal risk”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- July/August 2008, “The Misunderstood Builders Lien”, *Innovation*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 15-21, 2008, “The benefits of Standard form Construction Contracts”, Legal Specs, *Business in Vancouver*, Co-author Norm Streu
- April 9, 2008, “Point Counter Point: Understanding payment provisions in CCDC2”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- March 3, 2008, “Point Counter Point: Claims for a change in contract price in CCDC2”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu
- February 18, 2008, “Point Counter Point: Understanding the Waiver of Claims in CCDC2”, *Journal of Commerce*, Co-author Norm Streu

EVENTS

- 18/06/2018, Construction Seminar: Builders Liens

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS

- Law Society of British Columbia, Member
- Canadian Bar Association (Construction Law Subsection), Member
- Vancouver Bar Association, Member
- Vancouver Regional Construction Association (VRCA), Member
- Electrical Contractors Association of British Columbia (ECABC), Member
- British Columbia Construction Association (BCCA), Member
- Canadian College of Construction Lawyers, Fellow

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ALEXANDER HOLBURN