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Practice Areas

- Business Litigation
- Contracts
- Trade Secrets and Non-Competes
- Unfair Competition
- Indemnity
- Tort Litigation
- Catastrophic Accidents
- Products Liability
- Insurance-Collusion and Fraud
- Oil & Gas
- Environmental
- Insurance Coverage

**JOSEPH G. THOMPSON III
PARTNER**

Joe Thompson is a trial lawyer and founding attorney at WattBeckworth. For the last six years, he has served as the firm's managing partner. Prior to joining WattBeckworth, he was a trial lawyer in the Houston office of Fulbright & Jaworski, LLP.

Mr. Thompson handles complex commercial litigation and arbitration, with primary emphases on oil and gas related disputes, insurance related matters, unfair competition and business related torts. He also has extensive experience in significant personal injury and product liability matters.

Mr. Thompson has tried or arbitrated disputes ranging from personal injury matters to disputes involving exploration joint ventures in the Middle East, to tortious inference claims involving military tactical vehicles. He has repeatedly been named a Texas "Super Lawyer" in Civil Litigation Defense by Thomson Reuters (published in Texas Monthly) and has twice been selected as "Best Lawyers in America" in the area of Oil & Gas law

Mr. Thompson is admitted to the United States Courts of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and the federal district courts and state courts of Texas.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

- 1993 - J.D., *with honors*, University of Texas School of Law
- 1990 - B.A., *with honors*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Mr. Thompson graduated from The Kinkaid School in Houston, Texas in 1987. He then completed his undergraduate work in three years at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he graduated in 1990 with honors, *phi beta kappa* and as a James B. Angell Scholar. While at the University of Michigan, Mr. Thompson participated in intercollegiate debate, where as a sophomore, he and his partner were selected as the third seeded team in the nation at the National Collegiate Debate Tournament, where they finished as a finalist.

Mr. Thompson attended the University of Texas Law School on full scholarship, where he graduated in 1993. While at law school, he was selected as a Chancellor, Order of the Coif and was a member of the *Texas Law Review*.

PROFESSIONAL HONORS

- “Super Lawyer in Civil Litigation Defense,” 2005-2007 (recognized by Thomson Reuters, published in *Texas Monthly* magazine).
- “Super Lawyer in Business Litigation,” 2011 (recognized by Thomson Reuters, published in *Texas Monthly* magazine).
- “Rising Star,” recognized by Thomson Reuters (published in *Texas Monthly* magazine 2004).
- “Best Lawyers in America,” U.S. News and World Report (Oil & Gas Law 2007, 2011).

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

With almost 20 years of legal experience, Mr. Thompson's practice has encompassed many areas of litigation. Below are some representative matters in different practice areas:

Oil and Gas

- Representation of seller of \$155 million in Barnett Shale assets in arbitration alleging fraud and title defects
- Representation of purchaser of Marcellus Shale assets in arbitration concerning scope of purchase agreement
- Representation of oil & gas company concerning joint venture/operatorship dispute arising of exploration concession in Dead Sea area of Jordan
- Representation of oil & gas company in multiple matters arising out of operations in Deep Bossier in central Texas
- Representation of non-operating working interest owners in matter involving drilling of a well in the wrong location, inland waters South Louisiana
- Representation of oil & gas company in dispute concerning calculation of transportation charges for natural gas
- Representation of mineral owners underlying national park in challenge to administrative authority of National Park Service to restrict exploration and development
- Representation of major oil & gas company in suit alleging lease termination for cessation of production and/or failure to produce in paying quantities
- Representation of geophysical company in variety of suits alleging surface damages and trespass
- Representation of oil & gas company in suit to enforce preferential rights in the Permian Basin
- Representation of oil & gas company in dispute concerning preferential rights and asset acquisition in Robertson County, Texas
- Representation of an operator in suit alleging invalidity of unit in Brazoria County, Texas
- Representation of operator in breach of contract suit involving alleged compensatory royalties in Brazoria County, Texas
- Representation of operator in blowout related insurance matters
- Representation of exploration company in suit concerning alleged breach of lease acquisition agreement
- Representation of general partner of exploration venture in injunction suit to remove it as general partner
- Representation of party to participation agreement in suit concerning multiple agreements for acquisition of working and net profits interests
- Representation of oil & gas company in alleged breach of confidentiality agreement for seismic data contained in lease agreement
- Representation of landman in alleged fraud and breach of fiduciary duty suit
- Representation of royalty trust in drainage suit concerning calculation of net proceeds from operations on the Outer Continental Shelf

Business Litigation

Contracts

- Representation of company in breach of contract case and bankruptcy proceeding arising out of contract to acquire chain of jewelry stores
- Representation of pressure vessel manufacturer in breach of contract dispute and injunction matter
- Representation of executives in suit with former healthcare employer alleging fraud and breach of fiduciary duty
- Representation of commercial lessee in injunction matter involving easement
- Representation of software company in suit alleging fraud and breach of contract
- Representation of telediagnosics technology company in case alleging fraud, tortious interference and breach of contract
- Representation of fraternal benefit organization in suits alleging liability for agents allegedly "selling away"

Intellectual Property

- Representation of telediagnostic equipment manufacturer in suit alleging copyright infringement.

Class Actions

- Representation of insurance company in a putative class action for its manner of issuing salvage titles after a total loss of vehicles

Tort Litigation

Products Liability and Catastrophic Accidents

- Representation of large pharmaceutical companies against hundreds of suits relating to withdrawn medicines
- Representation of Japanese seat belt manufacturer in defense of product liability claims for alleged defects in several wrongful death and injury cases
- Representation of hand tool manufacturer for allegedly defective awl
- Representation of portable air conditioning manufacturer for allegedly defective unit
- Representation of worker killed by defective automated palletizing equipment
- Representation of medical device manufacturer in suit alleging defective manufacture of fingertip lancets
- Representation of trucking company in multiple wrongful death lawsuits
- Representation of relief agency in wrongful death lawsuit arising out of Tropical Storm Allison

Insurance

- Representation of vessel classification bureau in coverage dispute involving defamation claims
- Representation of insurer in coverage analysis concerning catastrophic vehicle accident
- Representation of biosolids company in \$20 million insurance coverage dispute involving liquidation of insurance company
- Representation of operators in blowout-related insurance coverage matters
- Representation of waste treatment company in insurance coverage dispute concerning operation/condition of treatment facility

SPEECHES & ARTICLES

- Joseph G. Thompson, James Thompson. *Discovery of Seismic & Geophysical Data: Issues and Opportunities*. State Bar of Texas Oil, Gas & Energy Resources Law Section Report. Volume 31, March 2011.
- Joseph G. Thompson, James Thompson, Jennifer Moseley, Franklin Ballard. *The Production of Seismic Data: E-Discovery, Trade Secrets, Confidentiality & Other Selected Issues*. State Bar of Texas, 25th Annual Advanced Oil, Gas and Energy Resources Law. October, 2007.
- Quoted in *Lawyers Log on to Big Changes with E-Discovery*. Houston Business Journal. December 15, 2006.
- Joseph G. Thompson. *Understanding the Fine Points of Business Interruption Insurance*. Houston Business Journal. June 16, 2006.
- Joseph G. Thompson, Dick Watt, John B. Beckworth, Brad Moody. *A Litigation Perspective: Selected Thoughts on the Express Negligence Doctrine, Exculpatory Clauses, and Indemnity in Joint Operating Agreements*. State Bar of Texas Oil, Gas and Energy Resources Law Section Report. Volume 26, Number 1. September 2001.
- Joseph G. Thompson. *Preparing the Defense Case for the Electronic Courtroom*. Association of Defense Trial Attorneys. Tucson, Arizona. April, 2000.
- Joseph G. Thompson. *Computer 101 - Teaching Old Dogs New Tricks*. Texas Association of Defense Counsel. Presentation. Dallas, Texas. 2000.
- Joseph G. Thompson. *Tort Reform and Entrenchment - Due Process and Punitive Damages: Protecting the Mass Tort Defendant*. American Bar Association Section of Tort and Insurance Practice. 1994.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS

- Houston Bar Association
- Texas Bar Foundation, Fellow