

Energy & Clean Tech

Cairncross & Hempelmann's Energy & Clean Tech practice group, featuring the Pacific Northwest's leading energy industry attorneys, provides deep and comprehensive expertise for companies in all aspects of the energy industry.

We offer comprehensive advice to companies with new ideas and technologies - from the start-up and financing stage through project development, supported by decades of experience in the complex world of state and federal energy and water regulation.

We also represent many traditional utilities, including publicly-owned and cooperative power and water utilities, as well as independent power producers, renewable energy developers and purchasers, oil and gas investors, and project developers. Our attorneys have successfully represented clients involved in the most complex energy transactions and in state and federal regulatory proceedings. In addition, our attorneys have successfully litigated leading cases in the U.S. Supreme Court, the Washington Supreme Court and throughout the state and federal court systems involving, for example, the Enron crisis and the major regulatory innovations of the past three decades.

Areas of Expertise

- Renewable energy development
- Federal and state energy regulatory matters
- Regulatory litigation
- Water rights and water transfers
- Community-based solar development
- Energy start-ups
- Power purchase agreements
- Energy and water conservation financing and transactions
- Greenhouse gas regulation, including trading of GHG credits
- Taxation and financing
- Energy storage
- Bonneville Power Administration and Northwest Power Act matters
- Municipal utility law, including Public Records Act compliance and litigation

- Power trading and Renewable Energy Credit transactions, including standardized transactions under the WSPP Agreement and ISDA forms
- Litigation and appeals in the state and federal courts
- PURPA
- Electric transmission and scheduling rights and transactions
- Energy industry start-ups
- Environmental and land use permitting and compliance
- Electric reliability and cyber-security regulation

Representative Matters

- Enron Crisis Litigation: Eric Christensen successfully represented Snohomish County PUD in multiple cases arising from the 2000-01 Western energy crisis, including cases in the U.S. Supreme Court.
- PURPA Matters: Successfully represented small wind, biogas, and geothermal energy producers in disputes involving transmission rights, power scheduling, and access to favorable rates for power sales agreements.
- Washington Appeals: Successfully represented Washington PUDs and electric cooperatives in amicus filings involving utility rights of way on public lands and expert testimony on health effects of electromagnetic fields.
- Public Records Act: Representing several major technology companies, successfully prevented release of proprietary, pricing, and other sensitive information concerning "smart grid" projects in face of requests for information under the Washington Public Records Act.
- Power Purchase Agreements: Successfully negotiated agreements for the purchase of thousands of megawatts of electric power from major federal hydroelectric facilities, wind facilities, and other renewable and traditional generation facilities.
- Water Conservation Start-Up: Advised Apana, which sells an advanced technology for water conservation on commercial properties, through start-up phase and successful launch.
- Community Solar Projects: Advised community-based solar project developers at sites including Bellingham, Bainbridge Island, and Mercer Island, on development of community-based solar energy projects, including three projects now producing power and a fourth in development.