



J. STEVEN SPARKS

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Steve Sparks handles complex civil litigation matters with an emphasis on product liability, insurance coverage, insurance bad faith, personal injury, toxic tort (asbestos), professional liability, and liquor liability. Mr. Sparks joined Sanders & Parks in 1995 and he currently serves as the firm's Vice President.

FULL BIOGRAPHY

Steve Sparks handles complex civil litigation matters with an emphasis on product liability, insurance coverage, insurance bad faith, personal injury, toxic tort (asbestos/benzene), professional liability, and liquor liability. Mr. Sparks joined Sanders & Parks in 1995 and he currently serves as the firm's Vice President. He has previously served in other positions on Sanders & Parks' Executive Committee and he is a shareholder and director of the firm.

Mr. Sparks has been selected for inclusion among the Best Lawyers in America in Insurance Law and Product Liability from 2018 to 2022. He has earned Martindale-Hubbell's highest AV® Preeminent™ rating and has been honored by AVVO (a peer-reviewed professional organization) with its highest rating – Superb Rated Attorney. Mr. Sparks has also been awarded the Client's Choice Award by AVVO. He is licensed to practice law in both Arizona and California and maintains an active practice in both jurisdictions.

Mr. Sparks is frequently called upon to handle complex insurance coverage and bad faith matters for insurance carriers. He has considerable experience providing coverage advice and litigating insurance law matters arising out of commercial, homeowners, automobile and workers' compensation policies. He also represents insurers in connection with Damron and Morris Agreements under Arizona law. Mr. Sparks also routinely represents insurance agents and brokers in professional negligence claims. Since 2010, Mr. Sparks has been consistently recognized as one of Best's Recommended Insurance Attorneys and one of the Valley's Top Lawyers (Insurance). He has also been selected as among the Best Lawyers in America for Insurance Litigation and Product Liability Litigation – Defendants.

For many years, Mr. Sparks has led a team of Sanders & Parks attorneys in defending complex asbestos litigation matters for a wide variety of national and international product manufacturers and suppliers, as well as premises owners and employers. He is regularly called upon to litigate claims arising out of alleged occupational and/or non-occupational exposures to asbestos-containing products and allegations of disease, including lung cancer and mesothelioma. Such claims involve a wide array of products, including brake linings and other friction material, valves, pumps, gaskets and household products.

Mr. Sparks is a seasoned trial attorney with a diverse practice involving matters of product liability (e.g., off-road vehicles, pharmaceuticals, electrical equipment, asbestos-containing products), personal injury and wrongful death, premises liability, public entity issues, and professional negligence, including lawyer, agent/broker and accountant/tax advisor malpractice. Mr. Sparks has defended accounting, legal and tax professionals in claims alleging nearly \$100 million in damages stemming from the implementation of allegedly deficient tax advice. He is actively involved in numerous opioid product liability matters on behalf of a major opioid drug manufacturer.

Mr. Sparks also serves as general counsel for a number of businesses throughout the State of Arizona and provides advice and representation on business-related issues including transactional matters, contract drafting/review and employment disputes.

Mr. Sparks is licensed to practice in the State of Arizona and the State of California. He is admitted to practice before the U.S. District Court, District of Arizona, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California, U.S. District Court, Central District of California and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. He is a member of the State Bar of Arizona, the State Bar of California, the Maricopa County Bar Association, Defense Research Institute, Claims & Litigation Management Alliance and the Arizona Association of Defense Counsel.

For more than 15 years, Mr. Sparks has volunteered his time with the Arizona High School Mock Trial program and has served as the head coach of the highly successful Brophy College Preparatory Mock Trial Team. Mr. Sparks has also been appointed as a Judge Pro Tempore for the Maricopa County Superior Court.

EDUCATION

McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific, Sacramento, California
Juris Doctor – 1993

- Honors: American Jurisprudence Award – Advanced Torts
- Honors: With Distinction

Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration – 1989

- Honors: With Distinction
- Major: Finance

BAR ADMISSIONS

- California, 1993
- Arizona, 1994
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California, 1994
- U.S. District Court, Central District of California, 1994
- U.S. District Court, District of Arizona, 1995
- U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit, 1998

JOINED FIRM

1995

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- State Bar of Arizona
- State Bar of California
- Maricopa County Bar Association
- Defense Research Institute
- Arizona Association of Defense Counsel
- Arizona Insurance Claims Association
- Claims & Litigation Management Alliance.

REPRESENTATIVE CLIENTS

- Admiral Insurance Company
- Armed Forces Insurance Company
- Burlington Insurance Company
- Honeywell International
- Stillwater Insurance Company
- Tyco International

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Best Lawyers in America – Insurance Law – 2019-2024
- Best Lawyers in America – Product Liability – Defense – 2020-2024
- Best Lawyers in America – Litigation – Insurance – 2024
- Martindale-Hubbell’s Highest AV® Preeminent™ Rating
- AVVO (A Peer-Reviewed Professional Organization) With its Highest Rating – Superb Rated Attorney
- Best’s Recommended Insurance Attorneys
- AVVO Client’s Choice Award
- Appointed as Judge Pro Tem by the Maricopa County Superior Court – 2018-Present

PRESENTATION SPEECHES

- Presenter, “Liquor Liability: From Opening to Last Call” – live presentation to Claims & Litigation Management Alliance (CLM) Arizona
- Presenter, “When the Dog Bites – An Overview of Liability and Coverage Issues” – live presentation to Arizona Insurance Claims Association
- Presenter, “Uninsured and Underinsured Motorist Coverage in Arizona” – live presentation to USAA Insurance Company
- Presenter, “Unique Aspects of Arizona Coverage Law” – live presentation to Admiral Insurance Company
- Presenter, “Insurance Coverage Basics in Arizona – Damron/Morris, Insurance Bad Faith and Reservation of Rights” – live presentation to Admiral Insurance Company
- Presenter, “The Insurance Bad Faith Set-Up – A Primer” – live presentation to Stillwater Insurance Company
- Presenter, “The Ins and Outs of the Employer Sanction Law in Arizona” – Healthcare Providers Conference
- Presenter, “Trying the Wrongful Death Case” – live presentation to USAA Insurance Company
- Presenter, “Coverage Issues in Homeowners Policies” – live presentation to USAA Insurance Company

PRO BONO

- Arizona High School Mock Trial – Head Coach – Brophy College Preparatory
- Volunteer High School Teaching Program

FRATERNITIES / SORORITIES

Sigma Alpha Epsilon