

## G. John Samms

### Partner

---



Suite 1100, Cabot Place  
100 New Gower St.  
St. John's, N.L.  
A1C 6K3

Phone: +1.709.570.8891

Fax: +1.709.722.4565

[gjsamms@stewartmckelvey.com](mailto:gjsamms@stewartmckelvey.com)

Language(s) spoken: English

Bar Admission(s): Newfoundland and Labrador,  
2016

Legal Assistant(s): [Sharon Tucker](#)

Ranked by Lexpert as a “Leading Lawyer to Watch” in Energy (Electricity), John is uniquely positioned to provide advice and advance client interests on some of the most complex matters facing the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. John is a thought leader in terms of legal aspects of the burgeoning hydrogen industry in Atlantic Canada and has led the provision of legal and strategic counsel to leading renewable energy and natural resource clients. John has expertise in regulatory compliance, labour law and public law, including constitutional and administrative law.

Beyond his increasingly busy natural resources and energy practice, John is also an experienced litigator as well as labour and employment practitioner. Some of his representative experience in these respects includes:

- Acting as co-counsel for the Attorney General of Newfoundland and Labrador in *Sierra Club Foundation v Canada (Environment and Climate Change)*, 2024 FCA 86, in which the Court dismissed an appeal relating to exemptions for exploratory drilling activities from certain requirements under the *Impact Assessment Act*.
- Successfully representing the Association of Seafood Producers in an arbitration relating to the illegal strike causing the temporary shutdown of the crab industry in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2023;
- Successfully representing the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador against an application for a recount in the district of St. John's East-Quidi Vidi after the 2021 Provincial Election;
- Successfully representing the Toronto Maple Leafs ECHL affiliate, the Newfoundland Growlers, in a highly publicized lease dispute with St. John's Sports and Entertainment Limited; or
- Successfully defending against multiple challenges to a development in the St. John's Battery region

Prior to joining Stewart McKelvey, John provided legal counsel to the Premier's Office of Newfoundland and Labrador – some of his representative experience there included:

- Member of the lead negotiating team as part of the \$2.5 Billion Hibernia Dividend Backed Annuity Agreement – an aspect of the 2019 Atlantic Accord renewal.
- Advising on provincial rate mitigation efforts to account for anticipated rate increases after the Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project.

## Practice Areas

---

Energy

Environmental & Natural Resources

Labour & Employment

Litigation & Alternative Dispute Resolution

## Education & Career

---

### Education

University of New Brunswick, JD, 2015

Memorial University of Newfoundland, MA, 2012

Memorial University of Newfoundland, BA, 2010

### Activities

Member, Canadian Bar Association

Advisory committee member, Drug Treatment Court Feasibility Study: An Opportunity for Hope

Commissioner, City of St. John's Assessment Review Court

Chairperson, Legal Appointments Board for Provincial Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Instructor, "Law, Governance and Public Policy" and "Constitutional Law", Memorial University

Member, Judicial Council of the Provincial Court of Newfoundland and Labrador

Chairperson, Constitutional and Legal Affairs Committee for the Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador

Member, Canadian Renewable Energy Association (CanREA), 2023

Board member – Choices for Youth

Board member – Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation

### Accolades

Winner of New Brunswick Trial Lawyers Association Prize for best performance in Trial Practice

Lexpert rating: Electricity, 2024

## Thought Leadership

---

Bill C-49 is blowin' a gale: A significant step in offshore renewable energy legislation

October 22, 2024

Canada's investment in hydrogen has substantial implications for the Atlantic Canadian wind power sector

August 06, 2024

Energy Watch

January 29, 2024

The Offshore Renewable Energy Area: Navigating offshore commitments in Newfoundland and Labrador

December 18, 2023

Privilege protected: Court of Appeal rules NL's Information and Privacy Commissioner barred from reviewing solicitor-client privileged information

September 20, 2023

Federal Government introduces amendments to expand the mandates of the two historic Atlantic Accord Acts to include offshore wind energy

June 01, 2023

The Winds of Change (Part 7): Paying the Piper: New Newfoundland and Labrador Fiscal Framework expects billions in revenues from wind to hydrogen projects

February 24, 2023

The Winds of Change (Part 6): Place your bids – Crown lands soon to be available for wind energy projects

December 15, 2022

The Winds of Change (Part 4): A Review of Rental and Royalty Regimes for Wind Development on Crown Lands: Options for Newfoundland and Labrador's Economic Wind Policy

August 03, 2022

The winds of change (part 3): Newfoundland and Labrador releases wind energy guidelines

July 27, 2022

The winds of change (part 2): Crown Land

July 21, 2022

*Update:* The winds of change (part 1) – Newfoundland and Labrador Government signaling major shift in energy policy

July 06, 2022

Right time to strike – Courts less reticent to strike pleadings in Newfoundland and Labrador

August 12, 2021

Newfoundland and Labrador mandates masks in workplaces

August 24, 2020

Temporary lay off timeline extended to 26 weeks from 13... temporarily

June 15, 2020

COVID-19 public health emergency in Newfoundland and Labrador – what you need to know

March 19, 2020

Are you compliant with the *Canada Elections Act*? New changes mean entities ought to be careful in assessing their obligations

September 09, 2019

Hydro-Quebec now subject to annual energy cap, but not a monthly cap, under much-disputed 1969 power contract:

*Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corp. v Hydro-Quebec, 2019 QCCA 1072*

June 24, 2019

## Publications

---

Co-Author, “*Prevailing Winds: Regulatory Frameworks and Commercial Realities for Developing Wind and Green Hydrogen Projects in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador*”, *Alberta Law Review*

December 08, 2023