



CRAIG N. JOHNSON

DIRECTOR ■ DENVER, CO

IRELAND
STAPLETON

OFFICE (303) 628-3656
EMAIL cjohnson@irelandstapleton.com

EXPERTISE Regulatory Affairs & Government Relations • Energy • Litigation

Craig Johnson brings more than 30 years of experience helping clients navigate complex legal, regulatory, and business challenges, with particular depth in the electric utility and energy industries. His practice combines seasoned legal judgment with a firsthand understanding of the operational, policy, and strategic issues facing utilities and the communities they serve.

Before joining Ireland Stapleton, Craig served as Director of Policy and Strategy and General Counsel for the Colorado Rural Electric Association (CREA), where he provided strategic policy direction and legal counsel to Colorado's electric distribution cooperatives. He previously served as Chief Legal Officer for Colorado's largest electric distribution cooperative and as Deputy General Counsel for Platte River Power Authority, a municipally owned wholesale electric generation and transmission utility serving four northern Colorado communities. These in-house leadership roles give Craig a practical perspective on the legal and business considerations that shape his clients' decisions.

Craig also brings significant experience in private practice. He began his career with a large national law firm and later served as managing director of a large regional Denver law firm, where he maintained a diverse commercial litigation practice. His experience spans banking and finance litigation, environmental claims, regulatory matters, construction and insurance coverage litigation, employment disputes, securities claims, and intellectual property matters, including trademark and trade secret disputes.

Throughout his career, Craig has also advised on the development of significant energy projects, including negotiating power supply and development agreements for utility-scale wind and solar projects. Drawing on his experience as both in-house counsel and a private practitioner, Craig works alongside clients to understand their broader objectives, anticipate challenges, and develop practical strategies that address both immediate legal needs and long-term priorities.

EDUCATION & ADMISSIONS

Education

- J.D., UCLA School of Law, 1992
- B.A., Colorado State University, 1989

Admissions

- Colorado
- U.S. District Court, Colorado
- U.S. District Court, Nebraska
- Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals
- U.S. Supreme Court

HONORS & AWARDS

- Selected to Colorado Super Lawyers for Construction Law, 2016

INVOLVEMENT & PUBLICATIONS

Involvement

- Energy Bar Association Board of Directors (2026) and President of Rocky Mountain Chapter (2025-2026)
- Electric Cooperative Bar Association (2020 - Present)
- Chair, Rural Electric Statewide Managers Association Regulatory Group (2024-2026)
- Board President, GRID Alternatives Colorado (2015-2017)
- Board of Directors, Opera Colorado (2012-2017)
- Board President, Colorado State University Alumni Association (1999-2000)

TRUSTED. STRATEGIC. PROVEN.

LOC 1660 Lincoln Street, Suite 3000, Denver, CO 80264

TEL (303) 623-2700

FAX (303) 623-2062

INVOLVEMENT & PUBLICATIONS

Presentations & Publications

- Western Utilities' Perspectives on Load Growth, IRPs, DER Integration, and Progress Towards Achieving Clean Energy Goals, October 29, 2025 (Infocast Events, Salt Lake City, Utah)
 - The Future of Net Electric Metering in Colorado, February 28, 2024 (COSSA Solar and Storage Mountain West Conference, Denver, Colorado)
 - How States are Addressing Climate Change, October 23, 2019 (American Public Power Association Legal and Regulatory Conference, Portland, Oregon)
 - Random Drug Testing, October 9, 2017 (American Public Power Association Legal and Administrative Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana)
 - The Right of Municipal Electric Utilities to Serve Customers in Annexed Areas, June 23, 2016 (Colorado Municipal League, Vail, Colorado)
 - Legal Challenges to Smart Meter Programs, October 17, 2012 (American Public Power Association Legal Seminar, Washington, D.C.)
 - Protecting Trade Secrets in the Hiring and Termination of Employees, 1 PRIVACY & DATA SECURITY L. J. 838 (Aug. 2006)
 - Spammer Beware! A Survey of State Statutes Regulating Unsolicited Commercial Email, 7 J. INTERNET LAW 1 (Sept. 2003)
 - Designing a Trade Secrets Program, 8 IP LITIGATOR 17 (Feb. 2002)
 - Minimizing the Risks of Misappropriation of Trade Secrets, 18 PREVENTIVE L. REP. 6 (Spring 2000)
 - Remedies for Trade Name Infringement, 28 COLO. LAW. 67 (July 1999)
 - Assessing Damages for Misappropriation of Trade Secrets, 27 COLO. LAW. 71 (Aug. 1998)
 - Litigating Lost or Missing Insurance Policies, 25 COLO. LAW. 115 (Oct. 1996)
 - Insurance Coverage for Environmental Claims, 25 COLO. LAW. 87 (Feb. 1996)
-

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

- Arkansas River Power Authority v. Babcock and Wilcox, U.S. District Court for Colorado. Obtained a multi-million dollar jury verdict for an electric utility on claims arising from the failure of an electric generation project.
- Delta-Montrose Electric Association v. City of Delta, Delta County District Court and Colorado Court of Appeals. Obtained a summary judgment in favor of an electric utility establishing its right to serve a new load. Summary judgment was affirmed on appeal.
- Copper Mountain, Inc. v. G&N Investments, Summit County District Court. Obtained a multi-million dollar jury verdict in favor of the former owner of a ski resort for unpaid development fees owed in connection with the sale of the resort.
- Regency Hotel Management Co. v. Evanston Insurance Co., U.S. District Court for Colorado. Successfully defended an insurance company against claims for damages that were not covered by the plaintiff's policy.
- Red Robin v. Discount Tire Co., Douglas County District Court and Colorado Court of Appeals. Successfully defended client in an action seeking to prevent development of a retail tire store based on restrictive covenants. Summary judgment was affirmed on appeal.
- Negotiated power purchase agreements and development agreements for a 225 MW wind project and 20 MW solar and battery storage project for a Colorado generation and transmission utility.

TRUSTED. STRATEGIC. PROVEN.