

ATTORNEYS

Dennis J. Cotter Partner

SmithAmundsen LLC

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Professional Background:

Dennis Cotter is one of the founding partners of SmithAmundsen and serves as Chairperson of the firm's Construction Practice Group.

Dennis is an experienced trial attorney and represents steel erectors, HVAC contractors, roofing contractors, general contractors, owners, architects, masons, excavators, and others, all in pending lawsuits involving catastrophic injuries with potential values in excess of one million dollars. He consults to general and subcontractors including litigation management, contract review, insurance and safety issues. Dennis completed the OSHA 10 Hour Construction Safety Course in 2002 and 2006.

In addition to an aggressive trial practice, Dennis is also a trained arbitrator for Illinois Mandatory Arbitration Programs, is trained as a Certified Mediator through Northern Illinois University, and has mediated cases in the 17th Judicial Circuit Major Civil Mediation program and in Cook County, Illinois.

Dennis received the designation of *Super Lawyer* in Illinois for 2005, 2006, and 2007 by his peers in construction law, as published by *Law & Politics* magazine. He also received an AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell for his legal ability and ethics and was recently named a Leading Lawyer in construction law and alternative dispute resolution by the Law Bulletin Publishing Company.

Education:

Dennis received his Bachelor's degree in Accounting from the University of Notre Dame in 1981 and his Juris Doctor degree from DePaul University College of Law in 1985 where he was the recipient of the Matthias Concannon Academic Scholarship.

Practice Areas:

- Construction
- Product Liability

Publications & Speeches

- Speaker, "Limiting Contractor Liability Before & After Litigation," **St. Louis AGC Construction Safety Fest**, St. Louis, MO, June 2006.
- Panelist, "Litigation Best Practices for Construction Companies," **USLAW Spring National Conference**, Austin, TX, March 2006.
- Speaker, **OSA Construction Safety Institute**, , SmithAmundsen Chicago offices, March 2006.
- Speaker, "Contractor Worksite Safety," **William Ryan Homes/ Assurance Agency Seminar**, February 2006.
- Lecturer, "Sword & Shield: Avoiding & Limiting Exposure in Worksite Injury Claims," **AGC Safety & Health Committee National Conference**, January 2005.
- Speaker, OSHA/AMEC Joint Construction Safety Conference, **SmithAmundsen offices**, January 27, 2005.
- Lecturer, "Avoidance and Reduction of Risk on Construction Sites", **Chicago and Illinois Construction Safety Council Training, Northern Illinois Hoffman Estates Campus**, Spring 2005.
- Panelist/Speaker (with Honorable Kathy Flanagan, Patrick Salvi), "Young Lawyers Training Session, Illinois Construction Litigation", **Chicago Bar Association**, 2005
- Speaker, "Contributory Negligence, Contribution, and Joint and Several Liability in Illinois," **Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel**, Fall Seminar, September 2004.
- Lecturer, "Illinois Contractor Liability from the Safety Professional's Perspective," **16th Annual Chicagoland Safety Conference**, ASSE and OSHA, September 2004.
- Coordinator/Speaker, **Assurance Agency Client Seminar and Training Workshops**, Reduction and Avoidance of Risk for Illinois Contractors, March 2004
- Author, Chapter 8, "Construction Damages and Remedies," **Illinois Construction Law**, (Aspen Publishing) 2003.
- Coordinator/Speaker, "Construction Defects and Insurance Coverage in Illinois," **full-day Lorman Education Seminar**, March 2003.
- Moderator, Construction Mold Seminar, **OSA Client Seminar**, February 2003.
- Speaker, "Joint and Several Liability: The Impact of Employer's Fault After Unzicker v. Kraft," **Chicago Claim Managers' Association Seminar**, February 2003.
- Speaker, "Liability Theories After the Structural Work Act Repeal - Section 414 of the Restatement," **IDC and Insurance School of Chicago, Joint Seminar**, November 2002.
- Speaker, "Preparing Your Case: Keys to Opening a New File that Guarantee a Successful Result," **Chicago Bar Association**

Seminar, May 2002.

Professional Appointments

- Vice-Chair, USLAW Network Construction Law Committee.
- Member: Associated General Contractors of America, American Subcontractors' Association Attorney's Council, Northern Illinois Building Contractors' Association, DRI Construction Law Committee.

The selection of attorneys to the Super Lawyer and Leading Lawyer lists does not guarantee a positive client outcome in any specific legal matter or engagement or constitute a representation by the firm of SmithAmundsen about the caliber of legal work performed by any other attorney not selected as part of these lists.