

2025 AIR SEMINAR

AGENDA



Permitting with Purpose: Air Quality Insights for Regulated Businesses

AUGUST 27, 2025

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM SPRINGFIELD, IL | CROWNE PLAZA

MORNING SESSION

Welcome

Kelly Thompson, Executive Director, IERG

Environmental GPS: Where We're Going and How We're Getting There

James Jennings, Acting Director, Illinois EPA

Illinois Air Permitting in 2025

Ryan Hendrickson, CAAPP Unit Manager, Illinois EPA

EJ in Permitting and Expanded EJ Efforts

Chris Pressnall, Office of EJ Manager, Illinois EPA

Regulatory Development: IPCB's Role Amid Evolving Federal and State Priorities

Jennifer Van Wie, Board Member, Illinois Pollution Control Board

LUNCH

Future of Illinois Energy

Alec Messina, Partner, HeplerBroom

AFTERNOON SESSION

Illinois EPA's Approach to AI Adoption

Andy Martin, Group Chief Information Officer for Natural & Cultural Resources
James Jennings, Acting Director, IEPA

Air Permitting- U.S. EPA Oversight of State Programs

Genevieve Damico, Supervisor Air Permits Section, USEPA Region 5

Compliance and Enforcement 201: Beyond the Basics

Andrew Armstrong, Chief Legal Counsel, Illinois EPA

Permitting in Practice: Challenges and Paths to Resolution - Panel Discussion

Moderator/Panelist:
Melissa Brown, Partner, HeplerBroom

Panelists:
LaDonna Driver, Partner, HeplerBroom
Connor Rutledge, Senior Environmental Consultant, Trinity Consultants
Bryan Higgins, Managing Consultant, Trinity Consultants

Closing Remarks

Kelly Thompson, Executive Director, IERG

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James Jennings
Acting Director
Illinois EPA

James Jennings was appointed as the Acting Director of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency on September 13, 2024. Prior to that, James was Assistant Legal Counsel to the Illinois EPA's Bureau of Land for three years. James is Chair of the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials' (ASTSWMO) Materials Management Subcommittee. James obtained his law degree from the University of Kentucky and his undergraduate degree from the University of Cincinnati.



Ryan Hendrickson
CAAPP Unit Manager
Illinois EPA

Ryan Hendrickson is a Senior Public Service Administrator with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, where he manages the Clean Air Act Permit Program (CAAPP) Unit and supports permitting efforts across Illinois. With over eight years of CAAPP permitting experience, he specializes in environmental regulations and the Title V permitting process in Illinois. Ryan holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. He looks forward to sharing insights on air permitting and engaging with industry to support best practices.



Chris Pressnall
Manager, Office of EJ
Illinois EPA

Chris Pressnall serves as Manager of the Illinois EPA Office of Environmental Justice, where he leads efforts to ensure equitable environmental outcomes across Illinois. In this role, he also acts as the Agency's External Civil Rights Coordinator and Language Access Coordinator, driving initiatives that expand access, inclusion, and meaningful public participation. He holds a J.D. from the University of Illinois College of Law (1997) and a B.A. in Zoology from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (1994).



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Jennifer Van Wie
Board Member
Illinois Pollution Control Board

Jennifer Van Wie is a Board Member of the Illinois Pollution Control Board with over 20 years of experience in environmental law and policy. She is a licensed attorney in both Illinois and Wisconsin. Jennifer attended Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in public policy from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) (1999). Then went on to study environmental law at Vermont Law School (now Vermont Law & Graduate School) in South Royalton, Vermont, where she obtained both a Juris Doctorate (2002) and a Masters of Studies in Environmental Law (2003).



Alec Messina
Partner
HeplerBroom

Alec Messina, Partner, HeplerBroom, spearheads HeplerBroom's Government Affairs practice group. In that role, Alec advises clients on administrative, regulatory, and legislative matters in energy, environmental, and natural resource areas before the Illinois General Assembly and units of state and local government. Alec also represents clients as part of HeplerBroom's Environmental Practice Group. Prior to joining HeplerBroom, Alec served as Director of the Illinois EPA and Policy Advisor for Environment and Energy in the Office of the Governor. Alec earned his Juris Doctorate from Southern Illinois University School of Law and a B.A. in Political Science from University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.



Andy Martin, Group CIO
for Natural &
Cultural Resources

Andy Martin is the Group CIO for the Department of Innovation and Technology supporting the Illinois EPA, Illinois DNR, Illinois Dept. of Agriculture and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. As a seasoned technology executive, Andy's expertise lies in seamlessly blending technology with organizational strategy to deliver measurable outcomes.



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Genevieve Damico,
Supervisor Air Permits
Section
USEPA Region 5

Genevieve has headed the Air Permits Section in Region 5 since October 2011. The group is tasked with oversight of the Region's new source review, Title V operating permit, and federally enforceable operating permit programs and direct permitting actions on Tribal lands. Genevieve received a Chemical Engineering degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1992. After which she has worked as an Environmental Engineer for the Air Permits Section with the Environmental Protection Agency.



Andrew Armstrong,
Chief Legal Counsel,
Illinois EPA

Andrew Armstrong serves as Chief Legal Counsel for the Illinois EPA. Prior to joining the Illinois EPA, Andrew served as Chief of the Illinois Attorney General's Springfield Environmental Bureau, where he supervised environmental enforcement and regulatory litigation on behalf of the State of Illinois. He earlier served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Illinois Attorney General's Chicago Environmental Bureau and an attorney for the not-for-profit Environmental Law and Policy Center in Chicago. Andrew graduated from the Northwestern University School of Law and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



LaDonna Driver,
Partner, Heplerbroom

LaDonna Driver, Partner, HeplerBroom, concentrates her practice in the area of environmental law involving air emission issues. LaDonna works closely with clients and technical consultants to understand facility processes and determine appropriate application of regulatory and permit requirements to those processes. LaDonna practices in HeplerBroom's Springfield, Illinois office. LaDonna earned her J.D. from Southern Illinois University Carbondale and holds a B.A. in biology from Rhodes College. <https://www.heplerbroom.com/professionals/driver-ladonna>



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Connor Rutledge, Senior Environmental Consultant, Trinity Consultants

Connor Rutledge is a Senior Consultant with Trinity Consultants and has spent 3 years based out of Trinity's Chicago office supporting predominantly Illinois clients with their air permitting and compliance needs. Connor's work spans several industries, including but not limited to oil & gas, chemical manufacturing, roofing and asphalt manufacturing, food manufacturing, and other general manufacturing. His experience also extends beyond air permitting and compliance to include various multimedia and sustainability projects. Connor takes pride in supporting his clients with matters big and small while fostering a collaborative environment. Connor's latest projects have been focused on addressing the recent ozone nonattainment redesignation, navigating compliance negotiations with the Illinois EPA and US EPA, and helping clients develop and quantify effective sustainability goals.



Bryan Higgins, Managing Consultant, Trinity Consultants

Higgins is a Managing Consultant for Trinity Consultants, and has been serving numerous Illinois clients from Trinity's St. Louis office for more than 13 years with his air permitting and compliance expertise. Bryan has managed dozens of air permitting projects for a variety of industries including oil & gas, power generation, chemical manufacturing, lime manufacturing, secondary metals and metals recycling, waste management, telecommunications, aggregates processing, roofing, and general manufacturing. He has a passion for tackling large and complex permitting projects and negotiating permit terms to benefit his clients and position them for compliance success. Most recently, Bryan has been engaged in projects which require navigating ozone nonattainment bump-up complexities, environmental justice hurdles, and assisting clients with long-term permitting strategies.

MODERATOR BIO



Melissa Brown, Partner, Heplerbroom

Melissa Brown, Partner, HeplerBroom, has developed a robust environmental law practice in which she assists businesses on a wide variety of environmental issues. Clients regularly rely on Melissa to provide counsel regarding compliance with federal and Illinois environmental statutes, regulations, and permitting. Melissa practices in HeplerBroom's Springfield, Illinois office. Melissa is a graduate of DePaul University College of Law (2014) and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2010, B.A., Political Science). <https://www.heplerbroom.com/professionals/brown-melissa>

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Melissa Brown
Partner
Heplerbroom

We navigate and bring clarity to the complex maze of environmental laws and regulations, including all phases of air, land, and water issues. And when litigation is necessary, we have the experience based on our defense of numerous enforcement actions and other environmental-related litigation, including mass actions, both in federal and state courts and administrative tribunals. The relationships we have built with environmental agencies benefit our clients as we work to resolve their compliance and permitting issues effectively and efficiently. We work closely with clients to identify goals and to devise strategies to achieve them. If negotiation is no longer an option, we provide vigorous advocacy in enforcement defense, permit appeals, and proceedings for regulatory relief. Learn more at <https://www.heplerbroom.com/>.



Chloe Reese
Principal Consultant
Trinity

Trinity Consultants helps industrial facilities across Illinois navigate complex air quality regulations with confidence. Our team provides practical compliance solutions ranging from air permitting and dispersion modeling to emissions testing oversight, recordkeeping, and regulatory reporting. With deep expertise in Illinois EPA requirements—including CAAPP permits, ROSS registration, Annual Emissions Reports, and compliance management systems—Trinity ensures facilities maintain compliance while supporting operational flexibility and efficiency. Whether you need strategic guidance, technical analysis, or training for your team, Trinity delivers trusted local expertise backed by national resources. <https://www.trinityconsultants.com/>



Michael Zebell
Senior Program Manager,
Milwaukee Office
TRC

For more than 55 years, TRC has delivered agility, fortitude, and peace-of-mind to public and private enterprises actively confronting changing landscapes. Our tested practitioners resolve your toughest challenges through an integrated approach that combines advisory, consulting, construction, engineering and management services for any built or natural imperative. Incorporated in Connecticut in 1969, TRC has spent half a century combining evidenced-based thinking with creative engineering and consulting solutions for a continually shifting world. From humble beginnings as The Research Corporation of New England, a meteorological and air quality analysis firm, TRC quickly expanded into the power and infrastructure markets and is now a global leader helping clients adapt to transformations, big and small. Learn more about us at <https://www.trccompanies.com/>.

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Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.



Joe Zlogar
Senior Principal
Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.

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John Kim
Of Counsel
Brown Hay + Stephens

Brown, Hay & Stephens is the oldest law firm in Illinois, with roots dating back to 1828. In the early years, many of Illinois' finest attorneys practiced with the firm, including a young Abraham Lincoln. Today, the firm offers a broad range of diversified legal services, including environmental law. With deep experience in key leadership positions at environmental government agencies, the environment and energy attorneys at BHS help clients navigate the complexities of state and federal environmental and energy laws and regulations. <https://www.bhslaw.com/>



Jena DiFiore
Business Development Manager
Mostardi Platt

Mostardi Platt is a full-service environmental consulting firm, proudly serving clients in the US and worldwide since 1976. As the world grows more environmentally conscious, Mostardi Platt recognizes the need for an all-encompassing consulting service to help businesses navigate environmental compliance and workplace related health and safety risks. Mostardi Platt is committed to bringing regulation changes to the forefront of our client's attention and to offering holistic solutions for all industries served. <https://mostardiplatt.com/>