



633 West Fifth Street
Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90071
TEL: 213.439.9429
FAX: 213.439.9599
rkahn@steptoe.com

Areas of Practice

Complex Litigation
Consumer Products
Litigation
Toxic Tort

Education

Case Western Reserve
University School of Law,
J.D., 1985

University of Colorado,
B.S., 1982

Bar & Court Admissions

California

Ruth Kahn

Ruth Kahn is a partner in the Los Angeles office of Steptoe & Johnson LLP. She is an accomplished litigator and trial attorney and has handled a wide variety of civil cases. For the last 20 years, she has specialized in the area of products liability and has successfully represented numerous companies in toxic tort cases. Ms. Kahn has been repeatedly identified as one of the top women litigators in the State of California.

Ms. Kahn's forte is defending complex, multi-party cases involving chronic medical conditions such as cancer, lung disease and birth defects in which it is alleged that exposure to a chemical caused the injury. Her mastery of chemistry, coupled with her keen instincts and top notch lawyering skills, consistently lead to exceptional results.

Toxic Tort Practice

Ms. Kahn actively represents manufacturers and distributors of chemical and petroleum-based products in personal injury and wrongful death litigation and at trial. Ms. Kahn works closely with a number of nationally renowned experts, including epidemiologists, toxicologists, and industrial hygienists to provide a highly skilled, comprehensive defense. She is particularly interested in cases in which law and science intersect. Very often, Ms. Kahn, together with others at Steptoe & Johnson LLP, represent all or a substantial number of defendants sued in an action.

Products Liability Litigation

Ms. Kahn has successfully defended the interests of numerous corporations in products liability and mass tort litigation across the country. She has been admitted *pro hac vice* in numerous jurisdictions and has extensive litigation and trial experience involving both industrial and consumer products.

Ms. Kahn has assisted in the successful defense of major pesticide/herbicide manufacturers in products liability cases in Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego Counties, arising from alleged exposures to agricultural, professional landscaping, and lawn and garden products.

Noteworthy

- California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) Award, 2012
- *Daily Journal's* Top Defense Verdicts in 2011, February 2012
- *Top 50 Women Southern California Super Lawyers*, 2010, 2012
- *Southern California Super Lawyers*, Civil Litigation Defense, 2006-2012
- *California Top Women Litigators, Daily Journal Corporation*, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011

Ruth Kahn

Representative Matters

- Defense verdict on behalf of Shell Oil Company in a hydrocarbon solvent benzene-AML wrongful death case, co-tried with Steptoe partner Larry Riff in Los Angeles. Plaintiffs, the surviving family members of a chemical salesman for a Shell distributor, contended that he contracted leukemia from the benzene contained in 13 Shell hydrocarbon solvent products, and his concurrent development of chromosomal aberrations were the hallmark of a benzene-induced disease. *Head, et al. v. Chevron Corp., et al.* Jury verdict returned February 2011. (The *Daily Journal* described this as one of the "Top Defense Verdicts" of 2011.)
- Summary judgment on behalf of Exxon Mobil Corporation and Texaco Downstream Properties, Inc. in *Canino, et al. v. Exxon Mobil Corp., et al.*, in a wrongful death toxic tort case where the decedent, a former gasoline service station operator, died from a rare type of brain cancer which his family claimed was caused by his exposure to benzene in gasoline and automotive products. Result date: December 2010.
- Defense verdict on behalf of a major California electric utility company in a product liability case in which it was alleged that a cable splicer's exposure to wood preservatives (pesticides) on poles jointly owned by the utility caused him to develop multiple myeloma. Jury verdict returned in May 2010.
- Defense verdict on behalf of Chevron USA Inc., Shell Oil Company and Union Oil Company of California in *Molina vs. Shell Oil Company*, a benzene-lymphoma case, co-tried with partner Larry Riff in Los Angeles County, in 2008.
- Defense verdict on behalf of Chevron USA Inc. in *Hooper v. Chevron U.S.A. Inc.*, a benzene-lymphoma case, co-tried with partner Larry Riff in Alameda County. (The *Daily Journal* described this as one of the "Top Defense Verdicts" of 2005.)
- Representation of a major producer of crude oil in a personal injury action involving 350+ residents of a public housing project which was built on a former oil field. Result: dismissals from, or summary judgments against, all plaintiffs.
- Representation of multiple chemical suppliers in a collection of personal injury and wrongful death cases involving 50+ employees or former employees of IBM's facility in Silicon Valley. The litigation, which spanned more than five years, involved a total of 135 different chemicals and 21 different injuries.

Ruth Kahn

- Representation of two major oil refiners in a joint defense in an action filed in Alameda County, California, by an employee of an independent contractor who developed leukemia following his alleged exposure to petroleum-based products at the defendants' refineries.
- Representation of multiple crude oil producers/suppliers in a joint defense in a case filed in Contra Costa County, California, by a refinery operator who developed lymphoma. Result: Summary Judgment for the defense.

Select Seminars & Events

Mastering the Deposition – A Critical Skills Workshop, Speaker, Pincus Professional Education, Los Angeles, CA, April 20, 2012

Crisis in the Courts: Strategies for Navigating the Budget Cuts, Moderator, WLALA's 17th Annual Litigators Forum, Los Angeles, CA, March 15, 2012

Ethical Issues for Televised Closing Arguments, Moderator, ABA Section of Litigation Trial Practice Committee LA Regional Workshop, February 15, 2012

Great Female Trial Lawyers: The Path to Achievement, Speaker, *California Women Lawyers Third Annual Conference, Building a Fulfilling Career: Lessons for Success*, Los Angeles, CA, April 29, 2011

Master Women Litigators: Biases and Assumptions Based on Gender, Race, and National Origin, Speaker, WLALA's 16th Annual Litigators Forum, Los Angeles, CA, March 17, 2011

Career Acceleration for Women Lawyers Teleconference, Speaker, National Association of Women Lawyers, February 24, 2010

Selected Publications

Pro Bono Through My Eyes
September 22, 2011, *Daily Journal*

Lawyers Debate Value Of 'Lone Pine' Orders
August 7, 2008, *Law 360*

Relationships with Co-Counsel: The Joint Defense Privilege
Products, General Liability, and Consumer Law
Spring 2007, *ABA Tort Trial Insurance Committee News*

The American Inns of Court: Legal Professionals Focus on Civility, Excellence, and Camaraderie

Ruth Kahn

November 1996, *Barristers Bulletin: Los Angeles Lawyer*

Professional Affiliations

California and Los Angeles County Bar Associations, Litigation Sections

Los Angeles County Bar Association, Member, Board of Trustees (2011-2012);
Member, Board of Directors of Los Angeles County Bar Association Foundation
(1996-2003); Inn of Court (early 1990s)

Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, Officer (2008-present); Co-Chair,
LACBA-WLALA Joint Task Force on Retention and Promotion of Women
(2011-2012); Board of Governors (2006-present)