Bricker & Eckler LLP is one of Ohio’s leading law firms with offices located in Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati-Dayton. We are dedicated to providing superior client service through understanding the industries in which our clients do business, including the oil and gas industry and the ongoing shale boom in Ohio. Bricker and Eckler’s multidisciplinary Shale Task Force includes attorneys who have decades of experience in oil and gas law and other relevant specialties such as environmental law, government relations, public finance and other critical areas.

The enormous potential of shale in Ohio is creating a regional oil and gas “gold rush,” and it is important to have experienced advisors to protect your interests and achieve your business objectives. With experience that spans nearly all of our major practice groups, the firm’s multidisciplinary shale task force has the knowledge and experience to counsel clients in Ohio on a vast array of oil and gas matters. Bricker & Eckler’s proximity to the Greater Appalachian Ohio area has allowed the firm to develop strong relationships with many local attorneys, businesses, organizations and community leaders. We often work in tandem with local practitioners to provide specialized legal services to business and organizations throughout Ohio’s numerous shale plays.

Bricker & Eckler has provided successful counsel to clients in every facet of the oil and gas industry, including upstream producers, marketing companies, natural gas utilities, midstream pipelines, financial institutions, landowners, and downstream natural gas customers.

**Project Finance and Economic Development**

Shale task force clients benefit from the specialized expertise of Bricker & Eckler’s project finance group, whose extensive experience with complex energy financing that is grounded in an intricate knowledge of structured and public finance. Our finance attorneys understand the issues and challenges associated with the development, construction, and financing of energy projects, and can provide the critical expertise necessary to understand asset-backed municipal and corporate securities, and grant programs at the local, state, and federal levels.

**Regulatory**

Shale task force members are actively involved in Ohio’s regulatory arena, giving them special insight into the complex regulatory issues that surround shale development in Ohio. Our regulatory attorneys, including a former Commissioner of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, have relationships with regulators and their staff members at various administrative bodies. We regularly appear before state permitting agencies including Ohio EPA, Ohio Power Siting Board, Ohio Department of Natural Resources’ Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, and the Environmental Review Appeals Commission (ERAC).
**Environmental**
Environmental issues will be a focal point in the Marcellus and Utica Shale initiative in Ohio. The environmental attorneys on the shale task force can help you:

- Understand Ohio’s regulation of wastewater discharges from drilling operations and the policies behind the handling and disposal of wastewater resulting from hydraulic fracturing;
- Maintain compliance with evolving Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act regulations;
- Obtain permits for air emissions, wastewater discharges, and wetland impacts;
- Address issues relating to groundwater contamination and the disposal of radioactive waste generated during the drilling process, including naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORM); and
- Advise on anticipated environmental concerns associated with hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling.

**Government Relations**
Every government relations attorney in our shale task force is a registered lobbyist with longstanding relationships with public officials throughout the State, in the executive and legislative branches of Ohio state government, as well as at the local level. As a result, shale task force attorneys do more than help clients navigate existing laws and regulations: we are able to effectively present clients’ viewpoints and advance problem-solving at every level of government.

**Litigation**
Our job is to understand your business and your goals and to work with you to identify and realize your most important objectives in litigation. Our litigation attorneys approach problems with appropriate caution, understanding that litigation may not always be the best method to resolve your case. Whether the solution is aggressive motion practice, mediation, arbitration, or trial by jury, our goal is to deliver results, while conserving resources and preserving important relationships.

When litigation is the most effective path, our litigation attorneys bring the needed experience, knowledge and skill to succeed. Our attorneys have handled large energy cases including landowner litigation seeking to invalidate shale oil and gas leases; disputes between coal mineral owners and pipeline owners; midstream pipeline disputes; breach of energy supply contract cases; and class action litigation against energy companies.

**Transactional Matters**
Attorneys in Bricker & Eckler’s shale task force have represented oil and gas exploration and production companies in all types of oil and gas transactions, and involving tens of thousands of acres and wells in the Appalachian Basin. Our experience includes:

- Preparing and negotiating oil and gas leases;
- Drafting and reviewing real estate and oil and gas conveyancing documents (e.g., easements, rights of way, and production-related property interests);
- Drafting oil and gas industry agreements such as AAPL 610 and other joint operating agreements, drilling contracts, gas gathering and transportation agreements, joint venture and partnership agreements, farm-in and farm-out agreements, and bank and financial institution financing agreements; and handling mergers, acquisitions, and dispositions;
- Representing both public and private landowners in oil and gas lease negotiation matters; and
- Providing general legal advice regarding various legal and contractual arrangements.
**Tax**

Bricker & Eckler’s Taxation department offers comprehensive services related to the tax planning, management and protection of assets of corporations, partnerships, LLCs and individuals. Attorneys counsel clients in all aspects of federal, state and local taxation. Extensive counsel is provided to business clients in the areas of formation, operation, and termination of business activities and business succession strategies.

**Labor and Employment**

The success of any business organization hinges on healthy employee relations and a clear comprehension of the law. Reflecting this critical role of employee relations, Bricker & Eckler’s labor and employment attorneys provide a comprehensive range of services in employment and labor law clients of all sizes.

With efficient, cost-effective service, we help our clients avoid lawsuits, comply with state and federal law, respond to discrimination claims, defend employment decisions, and manage employee benefits. Our experience in various practice areas related to employment allows our firm to assist your organization with the full spectrum of legal challenges.

**Construction/Occupational Safety and Health Administration**

The overall goal of our attorneys who specialize in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OHSA) issues is to help our clients provide a safer workplace for their employees and to represent our clients effectively with the OSHA Administration. We counsel an array of clients, from contractors and manufacturers to hospitals and schools, in matters before federal OSHA, state OSHA, and the state version of OSHA for public employees. While working together, our attorneys will help you prepare for and deal with OSHA inspections; respond to OSHA citations; and appeal decisions of Administrative Law Judges and the OSHRC, when necessary.

**Real Estate**

Our attorneys are experienced in working through the real estate and land use challenges posed by the construction of natural gas pipelines, cellular towers and wind turbines. As such, they are well positioned to navigate the issues arising from shale production in Ohio. We also possess knowledge and experience with issues regarding real estate acquisition, land use, and real and personal property taxation; site approval, permitting, and licensing; easements; eminent domain; and cross-jurisdictional projects, all of which will be critical to the shale initiative in Ohio.

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