

Energy, Telecom & Utility Law Section Hourly Rate Survey Results

In March 2008, the Oregon State Bar conducted a survey on behalf of the Energy, Telecom & Utility Law Section on hourly rates for Oregon lawyers. The survey aimed to provide detailed information on hourly rates charged by attorneys in specific areas of practice. *To see more detailed results from the survey, please see the attached printouts. All results in this report pertain to members of the Energy, Telecom & Utility Law Section and might not represent all Oregon lawyers.*

Methodology and Response Rate

All members of the Energy, Telecom & Utility Law Section with an email address on file with the bar were invited (via email) to participate. Of the 198 possible respondents, we received 42 responses, for a 21% response rate. Respondents were asked four questions: geographic area, firm size, years of experience, and hourly rates for specific practice areas.

Demographics

Survey respondents came from only four Oregon regions: downtown Portland, the Tri-County Area, the Upper Willamette Valley, and Eastern Oregon. The Oregon Coast, the Lower Willamette Valley, Central Oregon and Southern Oregon had no respondents.

The majority of respondents came from downtown Portland (60%).

The majority, 54%, work in law firms with more than 10 attorneys.

The average number of years spent in a practice area is 14-16, with the largest group represented having practiced 23-25 years (16% of the total).

Discussion of Survey Responses

Percent of time devoted to an Area of Practice (AoP)

Respondents were asked to specify how much of their work is devoted to a specific AoP. Only 9% reported that they devote their entire practice to a specific area and just over one-third (34%) spend 60% or more of their time on a single area of practice.

Experience in a specific AoP

When examining the amount of time spent in a specific AoP, it appears that most respondents haven't been practicing energy law for very long. In fact, 80% have been in a given AoP for 15 years or less.

The range of data goes from 0 years of experience up to 41+ years of experience. Of these ranges, the two largest represented groups were less than 5 years of experience and 11-15 years of experience, each with 29% of the total.

Representation of AoPs

Five different AoPs were listed. Respondents were asked which areas they practice in, and could choose more than one option. The most-represented groups were: Energy Law (34% of responses) and Public Utility Regulation (26% of responses). The least-represented group was: Telecommunications Law (7% of responses).

Hourly Rates Aggregate

Because individual respondents sometimes provided rates for more than one AoP, the total number of responses for hourly rates was 61. Respondents reported hourly rates in intervals of \$25. Intervals began at \$50 an hour and progressed up to \$450+ per hour.

About one in eight respondents (13%) reported an hourly rate of less than \$100 per hour. One in five (21%) reported between \$100 and \$200 per hour. One in four (25%) reported rates between \$200 and \$299. Another one in four (25%) reported rates between \$300 and \$399. And 16% reported hourly rates of more than \$400.

The average and median rate for Energy, Telecom & Utility Law respondents is approximately \$200-\$224 per hour.

What region (county) is your office in?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Downtown Portland	59.5%	25
Tri-County area (Washington, Multnomah, Clackamas)	26.2%	11
Oregon Coast (Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln, Coos, Curry)	0.0%	0
Upper Willamette Valley (Yamhill, Polk, Marion)	9.5%	4
Lower Willamette Valley (Benton, Linn, Lane)	0.0%	0
Southern Oregon (Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Klamath)	0.0%	0
Central Oregon (Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson)	0.0%	0
Eastern Oregon (all other Oregon counties)	4.8%	2
<i>answered question</i>		42
<i>skipped question</i>		0

What size is your firm?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Sole practitioner	24.3%	9
2-5 Attorneys	10.8%	4
6-10 Attorneys	18.9%	7
11-15 Attorneys	2.7%	1
16-20 Attorneys	0.0%	0
21-25 Attorneys	0.0%	0
26-30 Attorneys	5.4%	2
31-35 Attorneys	0.0%	0
36-40 Attorneys	5.4%	2
41-45 Attorneys	0.0%	0
46-50 Attorneys	0.0%	0
51-75 Attorneys	2.7%	1
76-100 Attorneys	2.7%	1
101+ Attorneys	27.0%	10
<i>answered question</i>		37
<i>skipped question</i>		5

How long have you been practicing law?

Answer Options	Response	Response
0-2 Years	5.4%	2
3-5 Years	8.1%	3
5-7 Years	2.7%	1
8-10 Years	10.8%	4
11-13 Years	10.8%	4
14-16 Years	13.5%	5
17-19 Years	8.1%	3
20-22 Years	8.1%	3
23-25 Years	16.2%	6
26-28 Years	2.7%	1
29-31 Years	2.7%	1
32-34 Years	2.7%	1
35-37 Years	2.7%	1
38-40 Years	2.7%	1
41-44 Years	0.0%	0
45+ Years	2.7%	1
<i>answered question</i>		37
<i>skipped question</i>		5

Percent of practice devoted to this type of case						
Answer Options	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	Totals
Energy Law	8	6		6	3	23
Telecommunications Law	4	1				5
Public Utility Regulation	5	3	6	1	3	18
Public Utility Litigation	8	2				10
Energy Project Development and Finance	5	3	1	3		12
TOTALS:	30	15	7	10	6	68
% of Total:	44.12%	22.06%	10.29%	14.71%	8.82%	

Number of years handling this type of case										
Answer Options	<5	5-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41+	Totals
Energy Law	6	5	7	3	2					23
Telecommunications Law	2	1	1					1		5
Public Utility Regulation	5	4	5	1	1					16
Public Utility Litigation	2	3	2	2	1					10
Energy Project Development and Finance	3	1	3	1	1					9
TOTALS:	18	14	18	7	5	0	0	1	0	63
% of Total:	28.57%	22.22%	28.57%	11.11%	7.94%	0.00%	0.00%	1.59%	0.00%	
	AVERAGE									

Hourly rate charged for this type of case																		
Answer Options	\$50-\$74	\$75-\$99	\$100-\$124	\$125-\$149	\$150-\$174	\$175-\$199	\$200-\$224	\$225-\$249	\$250-\$274	\$275-\$299	\$300-\$324	\$325-\$349	\$350-\$374	\$375-\$399	\$400-\$424	\$425-\$449	\$450+	Totals
Energy Law	1	1			2	1	3		2	1	1	4		1		4		21
Telecommunications Law						2	1						1					4
Public Utility Regulation	3	1			2	1	2		1	1		2		1		1		15
Public Utility Litigation		1			2	1	1					2		1	1			9
Energy Project Development and Finance	1				2		3					1	1			3	1	12
TOTALS:	5	3	0	0	8	5	10	0	3	2	1	9	2	3	1	8	1	61
% of Total:	8.20%	4.92%	0.00%	0.00%	13.11%	8.20%	16.39%	0.00%	4.92%	3.28%	1.64%	14.75%	3.28%	4.92%	1.64%	13.11%	1.64%	
	AVERAGE																	