

TRAILBLAZERS

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL

GABRIELLE SIGEL

JENNER & BLOCK

PIONEER SPIRIT When Gay Sigel began practicing in the 1980s, the environment was a fairly new area of law and CERCLA and RCRA had just been established. "It was a place to make a difference for my community, for development of the law and my own personal growth. It was wide open in terms of opportunity for women."

TRAILS BLAZED Sigel focuses on the intersection of workplace health and the environment. "Much of the environmental impacts are coming from our workplaces." Power and industrial plants have impacts that cross regulatory lines. "You have to look at both. This allows me to provide seamless advice, because I have knowledge of and practice in various areas of the law, such as insurance coverage and toxic torts." In one case, the water supply in retail and medical offices became contaminated, and a number of state agencies became involved. There was also media attention that needed to be managed. "We needed to bring in people who could do the testing and remediation and get systems up and running. These facilities needed to absolutely meet the highest levels of sanitation, because they have to deal with medical agency approvals for quality of care. You have to make people safe and convince them that they are safe."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS The lines between organizations will increasingly blur. "Whether it's business, regulatory agencies, community groups or NGOs, you have to look at issues holistically, and not in some superficial way. You have to understand the deep interconnections. The businesses and government agencies that make the community a better place will recognize these interconnections and plan for them."

