



# NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION DEFECT CONFERENCE

The Roosevelt New Orleans  
November 13-14, 2025

## CONFERENCE CHAIRS

**Gary F. Baumann, Esq.**

Baumann, Gant, Keeley & Biondi, P.A.

**Kelly Behrens, CRIS**

Vela Insurance Services

**Michael Bryant**

The RiverStone Group

**Steve Lokus**

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Agenda Sponsor:



**Perrin Conferences**  
**National Construction Defect Conference**  
**Thursday, November 13 - Friday, November 14, 2025**  
**The Roosevelt New Orleans, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel**

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**Wednesday, November 12, 2025**

**5:30 PM – 6:30 PM CT: Opening Cocktail Reception** (Outdoor Pool Deck – 4<sup>th</sup> Floor at The Roosevelt Hotel)

***Sponsored by: Reconstruction Experts and STENO Court Reporting***

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**Thursday, November 13, 2025**

**8:00 AM – 8:45 AM CT: Registration and Light Breakfast** (Waldorf Astoria Ballroom-Mezzanine Level)

**8:45 AM – 9:00 AM CT: Welcome & Opening Remarks** (Crescent City Ballroom- Mezzanine Level)

**Gary F. Baumann, Esq.**, Baumann, Gant, Keeley & Biondi, P.A., Fort Lauderdale, FL

**Kelly Behrens**, CRIS, Claims Manager-Construction Defect, Vela Insurance Services, Omaha, NE

**Michael Bryant**, Vice President, Head of P&C, The RiverStone Group, Manchester, NH

**Steve Lokus**, Vice President, Casualty Construction Claims, Sompco, Irvine, CA

**9:00 AM – 9:45 AM CT: Jurisdictional Analysis and Future Outlook of Nationwide Industry Trends**

- Overview of the most active and emerging jurisdictions
- Filing and building trends in 2025 and what to expect in 2026
- Facing the Future – Construction Risks in 2025 and Beyond

**Moderator: Michael Bryant**, Vice President, Head of P&C, The RiverStone Group, Manchester, NH

**Benjamin W. Dowers, Esq.**, Gunther Legal, PLLC, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

**Elaine K. Fresch, Esq.**, Hawkins Parnell, Los Angeles, CA

**Phyllis A. Modlin**, Director & Senior Counsel, Casualty Claims, Markel, Carlsbad, CA

**Cynthia Pertile Tarle, Esq.**, Kahana Feld LLP, Carlsbad, CA

**9:45 AM – 10:45 AM CT: Claims Resulting from Natural Catastrophes**

- Natural disasters reveal construction defects and cause more repairs, leading to lower quality repair work
- Influx of construction related claims
- Insurance companies are not renewing some policies
- Hurricane Katrina – 20 years later

**Darwin L. Coopridier**, Director – Building Consulting, Charles Taylor Engineering Technical Services, Golden, CO

**Stephen J. Henning, Esq.**, Wood Smith Henning & Berman LLP, Los Angeles, CA

**Scott Loeb, Esq.**, Loeb Law Firm, Mandeville, LA

**Ellen G. Smith, Esq.**, Boyle Leonard & Anderson, P.A., Tampa, FL

#### 10:45 AM – 11:00 AM CT: Break (Waldorf Astoria Ballroom)

#### 11:00 AM – 11:45 AM CT: Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in Construction Defect Litigation

- New issues and current application
- Associates and new graduates: how to attract them with AI and tech advancements
- Expectations and generational differences

**Paul Balentine, CPCU**, Associate Vice President – Specialty Casualty Claims, Nationwide, Scottsdale, AZ

**Abigail Horvat, Esq.**, Cozen O'Connor, Chicago, IL

**Terence Kadlec, P.E.**, Senior Vice President – Technical Services, MC Consultants, Inc., Denver, CO

**Steve Lokus**, Vice President, Casualty Construction Claims, Sompco, Irvine, CA

#### 11:45 AM – 12:30 PM CT: Florida Contribution Statute

- The future uses in additional insured situations

**Rebecca C. Appelbaum, Esq.**, gartner + bloom P.C., Tampa, FL

**Mark Boyle, Esq.**, Boyle, Leonard & Anderson, Fort Myers, FL

**Kelly Behrens**, CRIS, Claims Manager, Vela Insurance Services, Omaha, NE

**Christine Gudaitis, Esq.**, Ver Ploeg & Marino, Miami, FL

**Jay Sever, Esq.**, Phelps Dunbar, New Orleans, LA

#### 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM CT: Lunch (on your own)

#### 1:45 PM – 2:30 PM CT: Separating Fact from Fiction for Stakeholders: Common Design Professional and Contractor (and even Insurer) Misconceptions

- “All defects can be attributed to contractor means and methods”
- “Design defects claims have teeth”
- “A&E Liability is always limited by contract”

- “Insurance will cover all construction defects”

**Anthony D. Capasso, Esq.**, Murphy Schiller & Wilkes LLP, Newark, NJ  
**Tom Gesner, CRIS**, Vice President – Construction Defect, Applied Claims Group, Dallas, TX  
**Christopher Ling, AIA, NCARB, LEEDap**, The Vertex Companies, New York, NY

### 2:30 PM – 3:15 PM CT: Litigation Funding in Construction Defect

- Commercial construction
- Incorporating litigation funding in tort reforms

**Henrietta Hinojosa**, Senior Vice President, National Claim Services LLC, Atlanta, GA  
**Stephen Miles, Esq.**, Pipes Miles Beckman, New Orleans, LA  
**Jackeline Rodriguez, Esq.**, Hamilton Miller & Birthisel, Miami, FL  
**Kevin Skrzysowski**, Director, Certum Group, Plano, TX

### 3:15 PM – 3:30 PM CT: Break (Waldorf Astoria Ballroom) Sponsored by: *S.C. Wright Group*

### 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM CT: Emerging Coverage Issues in Construction Defect Cases

- Shrinking Statute of Limitations (SOLs in FL, TX, AZ)
- Statute of Repose
- Coverage issues to consider
- Strategies for handling the coverage and defense including risk transfer tips
- What happens after the carrier accepts the GC's AI tender?
- The handling of the AI defense and issues that arise

**Jay Graif, Esq.**, Freeman Mathis & Gary, LLP, Scottsdale, AZ  
**Derrick Harris**, Major Case Unit Specialist, FCCI Insurance Group, Santa Rosa Beach, FL  
**Brad Kilbourn**, Large Loss Claims Specialist, Construction Defect, AXA XL, Los Angeles, CA  
**Jorge Maza, Esq.**, Kennedys Law LLP, Miami, FL  
**Nicholas E. Richardson, Esq.**, Segal McCambridge, Tampa, FL

### 4:30 PM – 5:15 PM CT: Litigation vs. Arbitration

- The pros and cons of litigation and arbitration
- The rise of cases going to trial and the importance of early resolution

**David Frankenberger, Esq.**, Tyson & Mendes LLP, Fresno, CA  
**Marshall Henson, JD, DIA**, Claims Manager, CLESS – Specialty Casualty, Nationwide, Columbus, OH  
**Won Jai Lee, JD, CPCU, CCP**, Team Leader, ESIS ProClaim, Jersey City, NJ  
**Lee A. Weintraub, Esq.**, Becker & Poliakoff, Fort Lauderdale, FL

### 5:15 PM – 6:15 PM CT: Networking Cocktail Reception (Waldorf Astoria Ballroom-Mezzanine Level)

*Sponsored by: Boyle, Leonard & Anderson, P.A. and maps | Mediation & Arbitration*

**8:30 PM CT: Perrin Rock n Roll Threaux Down at the Toulouse Theater**

*In the heart of the French Quarter, located at 615 Toulouse Street. All registered attendees are welcome to join us for live music. Open Bar 8:30pm - 10:30pm.*

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**Friday, November 14, 2025**

**8:15 AM – 9:00 AM CT: Coffee and Light Breakfast** (Waldorf Astoria Ballroom)

**9:00 AM – 9:50 AM CT: Ethical Issues with Artificial Intelligence in Construction Defect**

- Ethical uses of AI
- How to properly navigate the conflicts that arise

**Federico Balestrazzi**, Civil / Structural Engineer, Kimley-Horn, Miami, FL

**Jerry Biondi, Esq.**, Baumann, Gant, Keeley & Biondi, P.A., Tampa, FL

**Spencer Mallard, Esq.**, Lydecker LLP, Miami, FL

**9:50 AM – 10:35 AM CT: Sharing the Load: Allocation and other Cost-Spreading Measures in CD Claims**

- Recent case law developments and suggested guidance
- Sharing the burden of increased costs, both from a coverage and a defense/claims-handling perspective

**Moderator: Alexa Schmid**, Coverage Counsel, Selective Insurance Company of America, Branchville, NJ

**Robert Kennedy, Esq.**, Phelps Dunbar LLP, Raleigh, NC

**Patrick Norris, Esq.**, Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, Charleston, SC

**Courtland Redden**, Construction Defect Claims Supervisor, Selective Insurance Company of America, New Windsor, NY

**10:35 AM – 10:45 AM CT: Break** (Waldorf Astoria Ballroom)

**10:45 AM – 11:30 AM CT: Who's Liable? Understanding Responsibility for Construction Defects**

- A methodical approach: identifying and categorizing the defects, assigning values, listing all potentially responsible parties, understanding their roles, and finally, allocating fair and defensible portions of responsibility

**Shannon G. Huff, Esq.**, Guerrero Huff Law Group, Tempe, AZ

**Jannea Rogers, Esq.**, Adams and Reese LLP, Mobile, AL

**Vadim Veksler**, Complex Claims Manager – Construction Defect Corporate Claims, Selective Insurance Company of America, Trabuco Canyon, CA

### **11:30 AM – 12:15 PM CT: Beyond Tract Homes: Navigating Complex New Construction Claims**

- The traditional/standard residential tract home cases
- Beyond tract homes
- Best practices and take-aways for navigating these claims
- Unique causes of action
- High-end single family home litigation
- Liquidated damages claims

**John Donovan, Esq.**, Kahana & Feld LLP, Austin, TX

**Philip Kunka, Esq.**, The Naumann Law Firm, San Diego, CA

**Barbara Laskaris-Lorigan**, Senior Vice President – Head of Claims, Golden State Claims Adjusters, Carlsbad, CA

**Luke P. Ryan, Esq.**, Shinnick & Ryan LLP, San Diego, CA

### **12:15 PM CT: Conference Concludes**

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## **Perrin Conferences National Construction Defect Conference November 13-14, 2025 New Orleans, LA**

*\*Speaker and Agenda are subject to change.*

### **CONFERENCE LOCATION**

**The Roosevelt New Orleans, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel  
130 Roosevelt Way  
New Orleans, LA 70112**

### **REGISTRATION**

**Registration Rate: \$1225**

**Paralegal Rate: \$395**

All in-house counsel and insurance claims professionals receive complimentary registration at Perrin Conferences live programs.

Contact Bethany Corio ([bcorio@perrinconferences.com](mailto:bcorio@perrinconferences.com)) 610-220-1817 or Lynnsey Perrin ([lperrin@perrinconferences.com](mailto:lperrin@perrinconferences.com)) 610-804-6165 with questions or to register at the complimentary rate.

**Register Online:** [National Construction Defect Conference | Perrin Conferences](#)

**Register by Mail/E-mail:** Complete the Mail-In Registration Form at the end of brochure.

**Mail to:** Perrin Conferences, 214 Orchard Way, Wayne, PA 19087

**Register by Phone:**

Lynnsey Perrin

610-804-6165

lperrin@perrinconferences.com

Bethany Corio

610-220-1817

bcorio@perrinconferences.com

Each registration includes private website access to course materials and admission to all sessions and networking events such as refreshment breaks and cocktail receptions.

*Group discounts available, please inquire.*

### **HOTEL ROOM BLOCK**

**The Roosevelt New Orleans, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel,  
130 Roosevelt Way, New Orleans, LA 70112**

Please make your room reservations by using the group booking link below. The group rate is \$349/night. We advise you to make your reservation as soon as possible before the room block sells out.

[Reservation Link Perrin Conferences Room Block](#)

### **CLE & CE CREDIT INFORMATION**

Applications are being made to all CLE states as requested by attendees. The conference is pending approval for CE Adjuster credit in Florida, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Please note, there will be no partial credit awarded for CE credit – The full conference must be attended to earn credit. Please send requests for state specific accreditation to Kelsey Miner at [kaminer@perrinconferences.com](mailto:kaminer@perrinconferences.com).

### **CANCELLATION POLICY**

If you cannot attend the conference, please notify us prior to **October 30, 2025** and we will refund your fee, less a \$25 administrative fee, or provide a credit for a future conference. The credit needs to be used within one year from the conference date.

Cancellations received on or after **October 31, 2025** will not be refunded. You may enroll a substitute at any time before the conference starts. Cancellations received on or

after **October 31, 2025** may receive a credit for \$200 less than the registration amount paid and can be used by their firm/company within one year from the conference date.

### **FINANCIAL AID POLICY**

Perrin Conferences is dedicated to providing high-quality continuing legal education to attorneys interested in course offerings. Program registrants who are unable to afford registration fees due to financial hardship may apply for a complete registration waiver or reduction in fee. Factors to be considered include employment status and annual income. Please send a written letter to Lynnsey Perrin addressing your financial situation for consideration. All requests must be submitted 14 days prior to the start of the program and are kept confidential.

### **THE PERRIN ROCK N ROLL THREAUX DOWN – THURSDAY 11/13**

Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 8:00pm-12:00am  
Toulouse Theatre, 615 Toulouse St, New Orleans

Enjoy a New Orleans style Threaux Down with live entertainment, open bar, and lively conversation.

\*This is a private Perrin event for registered attendees and speakers. Those who are not registered for the conference will not be permitted to attend.



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**National Construction Defect Conference**  
November 13-14, 2025 – New Orleans, LA

**Mail-in Registration Form**

Attendee Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company/Firm Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**CIRCLE ONE:** Attorney    Non-Attorney    Insurance Professional    In-House Counsel

**Registration Fee: \$1225**

**Paralegal Fee: \$395**

*\*All Insurance Professionals & In-House Counsel receive Complimentary attendance*

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

***Please Mail Form to: Perrin Conferences, 214 Orchard Way, Wayne, PA 19087***

***Email Form to: [bcorio@perrinconferences.com](mailto:bcorio@perrinconferences.com) or [lperrin@perrinconferences.com](mailto:lperrin@perrinconferences.com)***

***Make Checks Payable to: Perrin Conferences, LLC***