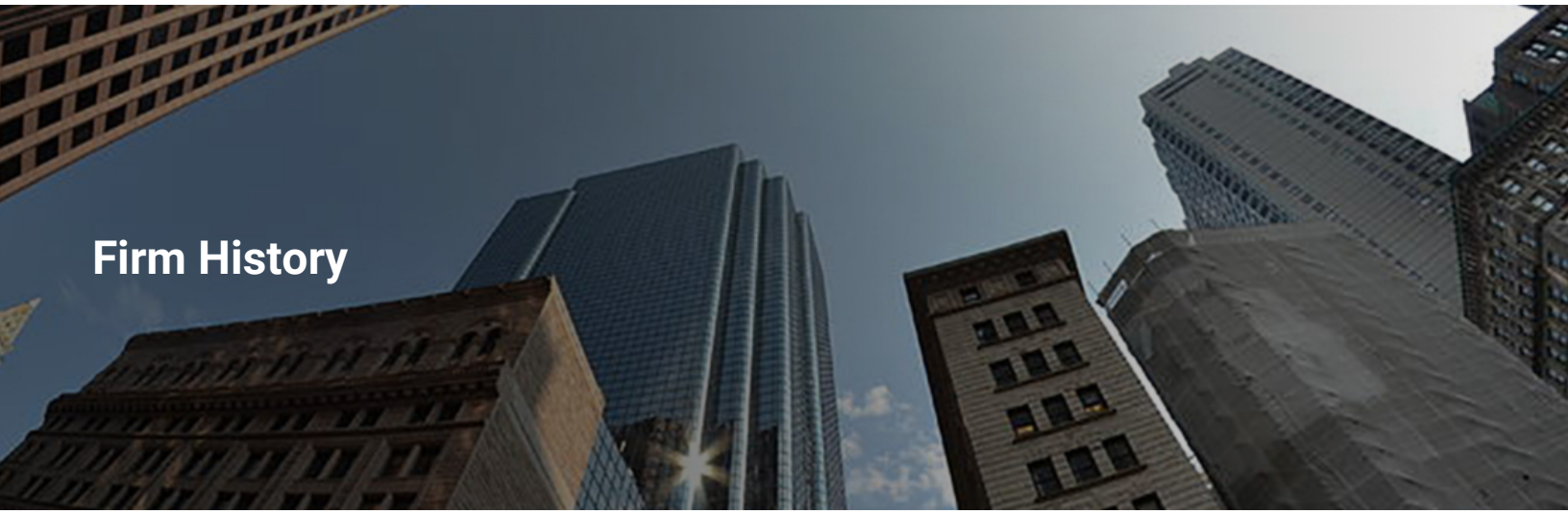


Firm History

From its inception, Rich May has been engaged in solving our clients' most pressing and complex legal and business problems.

Our capabilities include corporate & securities, mergers & acquisitions, private equity, venture capital, debt & equity finance, energy & utilities, telecommunications, life sciences, intellectual property, entertainment, civil litigation, taxation, investment management, employment, real estate, environmental law, international transactions and estate and wealth planning.

The firm's clients include investors, developers, utilities, investment managers, manufacturers and entrepreneurs located primarily in the Northeast, with a growing number of clients located elsewhere in the U.S. and abroad. These clients range in size from multinational corporations to closely held businesses and individuals. Rich May provides to its clients the specialized expertise generally associated with large, national firms, while maintaining the prompt service and personal relationships found in smaller, regional firms.

Rich May attorneys include many recognized leaders in their fields. It is our policy to remain on the cutting edge through affiliations with major universities, continuing legal education, and civic involvement in our communities.

The firm was founded in 1937 by John J. Burns, the first General Counsel of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Harvard Law Professor, and judge, and Ned Brandon, the SEC Regional Administrator and then United States Attorney in Boston. John Rich, a prominent attorney and executive in the public utilities industry, soon joined, along with Gerald May, Sr., a trial lawyer known for his defense of libel cases on behalf of the Boston Daily Record.

Other key founders include Edmund Blake, labor lawyer and former Regional Administrator of the National Labor Relations Board; Henry Leen, trial attorney, judge, and legal advisor to

Services

- Business, Corporate & Securities
- Commercial Lending
- Commercial Real Estate
- Employment & Employee Benefits
- Energy, Renewables & Regulated Industries
- Estate Planning, Tax & Probate
- Investment Management & Private Funds
- Litigation & Dispute Resolution
- Real Estate Development
- Trademark & Copyright

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Cardinal Cushing; Thomas Bilodeau, Sr., noted athlete, Kennedy family advisor and public utilities specialist; Arthur Flaherty, prominent lawyer and entrepreneur; Harold Dondis, chess champion and columnist; and Walter Landergan, master of corporate and securities transactions. All of these leaders continue to leave their mark on the firm that Rich May has become.

Learn more about our history in the slider below or download the PDF presentation that was shown at the 75th Anniversary Celebration!

Rich May Timeline

2010's

2011

- Firm represents consortium of gas and electric companies in implementation of $2,000,000,000 + Energy Efficiency Programs under Massachusetts Green Communities Act.
- Firm represents Destination Wedding Travel, Inc., one of Inc. 5000 top 150 fastest growing U.S. companies generally and in connection with sale of the Company.
- Firm represents AstonField Renewables Resources, which completes $47,000,000 financing and commissions utility scale 19.3 megawatt solar generating project in India.

2012

Firm advises Algonquin Gas Transmission LLC and Texas Eastern Gas Pipeline LP on federal preemption, land acquisition and federal eminent domain and immediate entry matters concerning their New Jersey/ New York Extension Project.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

2010's

Rich May represents several title insurance companies in precedent setting cases before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court on mortgage foreclosure procedures and in dozens of follow-on cases before the Massachusetts Superior Court.

2010

- Rich May attorney Erica Bigelow is one of the principal drafters of the Commonwealth's New Homestead Act, working with legislators and other bar groups to insure its passage. The bill, which modernized and greatly expanded homestead rights of residents of the Commonwealth became law on December 16, 2010.

- Rich May dominates field to win 3rd Annual Lawyers Have Heart Road Race.

Rich May Timeline

2000's

2009

- Firm continues representation of medical device maker, Hamilton Thorne after going public through its cross border merger with Calotto Capital.

HAMILTON THORNE

- Rich May represents JHR Development of Maine, LLC in connection with award-winning Maine Street Station project in Brunswick, Maine, which brings the Downeaster passenger rail service twice a day from Portland north to Brunswick. In addition to a railway station, the project also houses retail, office, and residential spaces, part of which has been leased by Bowdoin College.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

2000's

2006

- Rich May represents George Appell & Appell Family in a restructuring o multi-generational family businesses, including the $2 billion sale of Susquehanna Pfaltzgraff and its operating divisions.

Super Lawyers

2007

Rich May begins 6 year continuing run of having more than one-third of its attorneys named SuperLawyers.

2008

Firm represents competitive telecommunications carrier, RNK in $40,000,000 sale.

RNK COMMUNICATIONS

Rich May Timeline

2000's

2005

Firm member Eric Krathwohl helps establish nation's first Clean Tech business plan competition, Ignite Clean Energy; Rich May sponsors inaugural competitions.

2006

- Rich May attorney Jim Behnke authors an article published in the Energy Law Journal on obtaining immediate entry for interstate natural gas pipelines and electric transmission facilities in federal eminent domain proceedings.

- Rich May elected as Boston member of International Alliance of Law Firms.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF LAW FIRMS

Rich May Timeline

2000's

2004

Rich May attorney Jim Behnke authors an article published in Massachusetts Law Review on obtaining land access for telecommunication companies.

Rich May successfully represents Olin College in critical infrastructure disputes in connection with construction and start-up of this acclaimed higher educational institution.

Rich May Timeline

2000's

2002

Firm represents Algonquin Gas Transmission Company in easement rights acquisition for Maritimes and HubLine Pipeline Project connecting Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline in Dracut, Massachusetts with the Algonquin pipeline system in Weymouth, Massachusetts.

Firm files and manages over 120 condemnation complaints in United States District Court and obtaining necessary immediate entry and easement rights.

Rich May Timeline

2000's

2000

Firm represents HealthGate Data Corp. in its $40,000,000 initial public offering.

2001

- Firm represents essential.com, one of first online utility companies, assisted in capital raise of over $400,000,000.

- Firm name changed to Rich May, a Professional Corporation.

RichMay

Rich May Timeline

1999

- Rich May represents dozens of competitive telecommunications companies emerging in response to 1996 Telecommunications Act.

berkshire gas
Energy You Can Count On.
People You Can Trust.

- Firm represents The Berkshire Gas Company in approximately $100,000,000 sale.

- Rich May represents client Trident Capital, a venture capital fund, for the first time.

TRIDENT CAPITAL

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

1998

Rich May advises and represents Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline, LLC and Portland Natural Gas Transmission System in permitting, land acquisition, immediate entry and eminent domain matters in the construction of their Joint Facilities Pipeline Project in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

The Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline brings offshore, onshore and LNG-sourced natural gas from Atlantic Canada to North American markets.

With 670 miles of pipeline (340 miles U.S.), Maritimes provides fuel for the northeast United States and Atlantic Canada - 600 MMcf/d of natural gas capacity on the Canadian side and 800 MMcf/d on the U.S. side.

Rich May Timeline

1990's

1997

- Rich May represents McCourt Family in the creation of RCN , a new Residential Telephone, and Internet company with national expansion plans and in $400,000,000 Joint Venture with Boston Edison.

- Rich May represents McCourt Family in sale of McCourt Fiber Network to WorldCom for $40,000,000.

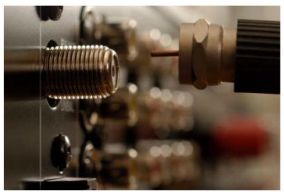
- Firm represents Fall River Gas Company in $50,000,000+ sale.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

1990's

1993
Rich May represents McCourt Family in the building of a new Cable TV system in Boston using new proprietary high speed construction techniques.



1995

- Firm represents Peer Review Analysis in merger with Core Management.

- Rich May represents Cornerstone Holdings Group in its initial $60MM Financing; and during the subsequent six Cornerstone acquisitions of growing catalogue companies, including Frontgate, Garnet Hill, Smith and Noble and others; The Cornerstone Group was sold in 2005 to IAC Interactive Corp (Home Shopping Network) for $750 Million.

Rich May Timeline

1990's

1991
Rich May represents Algonquin Gas Transmission Company on federal preemption matters in federal and state courts in New York in a series of lawsuits by the Town of Stony Point and its residents to shut down Algonquin's Stony Point Compressor Station.

1992
Firm represents Algonquin Gas Transmission Company in its first actively contested federal eminent domain action and obtains an immediate entry order and preliminary injunction against the City of Medford, Massachusetts.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

1990's

1990

- Firm conceives ground-breaking litigation on $100,000,000 nuclear plant litigation and represents utility purchaser of electricity in successful settlement thereof.

- Rich May represents Peer Review Analysis, Inc, in its $12,000,000 initial public offering.

Rich May Timeline

1980's

1986

Rich May advises Algonquin Gas Transmission Company on use of federal eminent domain rights under the Natural Gas Act and the first immediate entry order achieved under that Act, which became a critical tool in the further development of natural gas pipelines in New England and elsewhere in the country.

1988

Rich May represents Palm Beach Company in $400 Million Leveraged Buy-Out.

1989

Firm successfully handles record setting four Massachusetts utility rate cases in single year.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

1980's

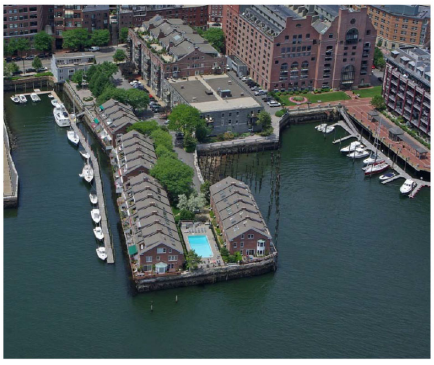
Rich May assists in "roll-up" of numerous Coca-Cola bottling distributorships in New York Pennsylvania and New Hampshire, creating the ninth largest Coca-Cola bottling franchise in the United States before its highly successful sale.

Firm represents utility purchasers in numerous "QF" Power Purchase Contracts, including wind, hydro and cogeneration plants.

Rich May Timeline

1978

• Rich May represents Frank McCourt in the development of Union Wharf, the first new waterfront residential condominiums in many years.



• Rich May also represented Frank McCourt in his acquisition of a large parcel of land in South Boston (Fan Pier, also called the Penn Central Railway Yard) which property was used many years later in his acquisition of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

1976

• Firm represents Canal Electric in finance and construction of a second 560 MW electric generating plant on Cape Cod.

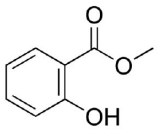
• The Firm changes its name to Rich, May, Bilodeau & Flaherty.

• Firm wins major case at U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for group of utilities regarding President Ford's oil import fee involving millions of dollars and their customers. Though the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Court of Appeals, the President did not try to reinstate the fee.

Rich May Timeline

1972

• Rich May represents Algonquin LNG, Inc. in the acquisition of a 600,000 barrel LNG storage complex in Providence, RI.



• Firm represents Algonquin SNG, Inc., in the acquisition of land rights and construction and operation in Freetown, MA of New England's only synthetic natural gas manufacturing facility.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved | 176 Federal Street, Boston, MA 02110-2223 | T 617-556-3800

Rich May Timeline

1960's

1964

•Rich May Attorney Harold Dondis draws chess match with Bobby Fischer.

•Harold Dondis starts writing the Chess column for the Boston Globe.

1965

Rich May represents Superior Carriers, a national trucking company and current client, for the first time.

1968

Rich May represents Canal Electric in finance and construction of 560 electric generating plants on Cape Cod.

Rich May Timeline

1950's

1957

Firm successfully handles proxy fight for New England Gas and Electric; Rich May Attorney John Rich becomes Chairman of New England Gas and Electric Association, one of the largest combination gas-electric utility companies in New England (which continued as a client of Rich May).

1957

Firm renamed Rich, May & Bilodeau.

Rich May Timeline

1950's

Rich May fulfills key legal roles in expansion of natural gas pipeline system into Northeast US.

1955
Rich May successfully handles proxy fight and begins representing Fall River Gas and Corning Natural Gas.

Rich May Timeline

1940's

Utility Holding Company Reorganizations: Based upon Burns' experience as 1st General Counsel of the SEC, the firm took a leading role in the reorganization of several major utility companies throughout the Eastern US.

BOSTON DAILY ADVERTISER.

Rich May begins its decades-long service to prominent Boston newspapers as Counsel to Boston Daily Record. This representation continued through the 1970s, with Gerald V. May handling libel cases and most of the trial work for the Boston Daily Record, the Sunday Advertiser and ultimately the Boston Herald.

1945
Harold B. Dondis graduates #1 in his class at Harvard Law School and is hired by Rich May.

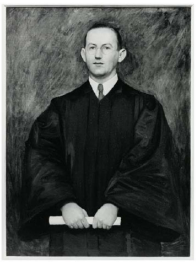
©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

1930's

1938
Edmund J. Brandon named US Attorney in Boston.
1939
Firm renamed Burns, Blake & Rich.

Edmund J. Brandon


John J. Burns

Rich May Timeline

1930's

1937
Rich May founded by John J. Burns & Edmund J. Brandon.

John J. Burns founded the firm in 1937, following his service as counsel to the S.E.C. Burns quickly established a very prosperous law practice. During his career, he served as a director of W.R. Grace & Co., the Columbia Broadcasting System, Eastern Gas and Fuel Associates, the United Corporation, International Power Limited, and the Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved

Rich May Timeline

1930's

John J. Burns

John J. Burns became a full professor at the Harvard Law School at the age of 28, and a Massachusetts Superior Court Justice, at age 29, the youngest in the Court's history. After 3 years on the Superior Court, he became the first general counsel of the S.E.C., of which Joseph P. Kennedy was the first Chairman.

©2026 Rich May, P.C. All Rights Reserved