

Edwards Wildman Lures Reed Smith Competition Pro

By **Ben James**

Law360, New York (December 05, 2011, 6:49 PM ET) -- Edwards Wildman Palmer LLP has bolstered its litigation team in Washington by bringing over a veteran antitrust litigator with experience analyzing merger and acquisition activity from Reed Smith LLP, the firm said Thursday.

Stephen P. Murphy, who started work at Edwards Wildman on Thursday, joined the firm as a partner in its litigation department. Murphy spent more than 14 years at Reed Smith. He also spent 6 years with McDermott Will & Emery LLP.

Murphy has a comprehensive antitrust practice. He spends the lion's share of his time on litigation, while devoting roughly one-quarter or one-third of his efforts to counseling work, he said. In addition to prosecuting and defending civil antitrust matters, he has experience counseling on criminal antitrust probes, doing M&A analysis and advising on pricing and distribution issues.

"I hold the lawyers at Reed Smith in very high regard," Murphy said Monday. "The Edwards Wildman Palmer platform, with its antitrust focus, was just a better fit for me."

While at Reed Smith, Murphy represented plaintiff Parkdale Mills Inc. — which had opted out of a previous class action settlement — in a multiplaintiff class action antitrust case against Hoechst Celanese Corp. over polyester staple fiber, which led to a \$107 million settlement, nearly \$10 million of which went to Parkdale.

In addition to his antitrust work, Murphy also helps clients navigate the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's regulatory regime. His CPSC work involves almost exclusively counseling, as opposed to litigation, Murphy said.

Edwards Wildman Palmer LLP, which has 14 offices and about 650 lawyers, officially launched in October after Boston-based Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP and Chicago firm Wildman Harrold Allen & Dixon LLP came together. The firm's respective partnerships voted to join in August.

The union of the two firms produced a good, cohesive cadre of antitrust trial lawyers, according to Murphy. He also noted that he previously knew and litigated against many of the lawyers he now works side by side with at Edwards Wildman, which helped make picking his new firm an easy choice.

"I'm very pleased to be here," Murphy said.

It appears that the feeling is mutual. Greg Young, the partner in charge of the firm's Washington office, said that clients — both in the nation's capital and firm-wide — would benefit immediately from Murphy's addition.

“With his background and capabilities, Steve is the perfect choice with whom to position and build out an essential antitrust practice in our growing office in the District of Columbia,” said Young.

--Editing by Cara Salvatore.

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