

Sonnenschein law firm is expanding Dallas office

Dallas Business Journal - by [Bill Hethcock](#) Staff writer

Friday, June 27, 2008

A national law firm that's rapidly adding attorneys in its Dallas office is taking two floors in a luxury office tower under construction in Uptown.

Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP has signed a 10-year lease for 36,000 square feet on the 19th and 20th floors of the new 2000 McKinney Ave. building, also known as the Texas Capital Bank building. The Chicago-based firm has occupied one floor in Comerica Bank Tower at 1717 Main Street since opening its Dallas office with only two lawyers in April 2007.

It has since grown to 25 lawyers and a total staff of 53, and plans to have 45 to 55 lawyers by the end of 2009, said Matthew D. Orwig, managing partner of Sonnenschein's Dallas office and former U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Texas.

The 2000 McKinney building is expected to be complete this fall, and Sonnenschein plans to move in during the fourth quarter of this year, Orwig said.

"We have enjoyed this (Comerica Tower) building, but as we look to the future, we have a long-term commitment to Dallas and expect growth in this market for many, many years to come," Orwig said. "It makes sense that we would be moving to the part of town that really symbolizes growth."

He said the 2000 McKinney building's proximity to Uptown's restaurants, shopping, hotels, condos, apartments, the Arts District and the planned five-acre urban park over Woodall Rodgers Freeway factored into the move. The Uptown address will make it easier to recruit top talent, he added.

"We wanted our permanent space to reflect our culture," Orwig said. "We're a progressive and dynamic office, and the building really reinforces that."

Sonnenschein plans to expand existing practice groups in the areas of intellectual property, tax litigation, patent litigation and insurance regulation and add practice groups specializing in health care, renewable energy and other areas.

Sustainable design strategies such as the use of recycled and recyclable materials and energy-efficient lighting will play an important role in Sonnenschein's new offices, said Brigitte Preston, design principal of interior architecture firm lauckgroup, which is designing the space.

"Sonnenschein wanted a space that will promote interaction between the attorneys," Preston said. "There's much more community and collaborative space built into the floorplan than in the traditional law firm."

The 21-story, 2000 McKinney building is being developed and leased by **Lincoln Property Co.** Texas Capital Bank secured naming rights by preleasing 100,000 square feet, which got construction rolling.

Another law firm, the Dallas office of Patton Boggs LLP, has leased 114,000 square feet in the tower.

Space in the building leases for \$35 to \$39 a square foot, plus electricity. The Sonnenschein lease takes the 442,000-square-foot building to about 70% leased.