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Buzz Mailbag: Appleton auto dealership, EZ Lube are closed

By [Maureen Wallenfang](#) • Post-Crescent staff writer • July 22, 2008

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Q: I see the auto dealership on W. Wisconsin called Blue Diamond has only one or two cars on their lot.

They also sold boats there as well. Are they closed or closing?

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A: It's closed. According to Outagamie County property tax records, Blue Diamond Auto Sales at 1325 N. Linwood Ave., Appleton, is now owned

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by Anchor Bank. It was previously owned by Burton Commercial Investments, which also owned EZ Lube at 1708 W. Wisconsin Ave. That business is also closed.

In addition, the deeds for more than a dozen other properties owned by either Burton Commercial Investments or Diamond Quality Builders or Rory Burton, now are accompanied by an “affidavit of fair dealing” in county records.

The document, said a lawyer, means the properties have been turned over to a lender.

“It is a document from a borrower which acknowledges they have been treated fairly in relinquishing their property to a creditor,” said attorney Patricia Gibeault, with the Madison law firm Axley Brynelson, who drafted at least one of the documents for Burton. “It is usually a surrender in lieu of foreclosure.”

If you’re looking for Warner Neuman, the high end mechanic known for his work on Mercedes, BMWs and Porsches, who had been at Blue Diamond, and later EZ Lube, he moved two weeks ago to 1590 S. Oneida Street in the Town of Menasha.

Phone: 920-882-0507. He leased a garage on the property of Mega Motorworks, an auto sales lot.

Q: Why was the Taco Bell, anchored inside of Larry’s Piggly Wiggly in Kaukauna, replaced with a soon-to-open Taco John’s?

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A: It was prompted by a change in Taco Bell's corporate policy. The company was getting rid of its smaller licensees, including this one, and working primarily with franchisors, said Tom Verhagen, president of Larry's Markets, which has grocery stores in Kaukauna, Little Chute, Manitowoc and De Pere.

"Our license expired. They granted us a six-month extension, but we knew our days were numbered," he said.

Taco Bell was not able to give him a franchise despite the fact that they'd given his branch sales awards, he said.

So he went shopping for a new restaurant partner.

"Taco John's was a good choice because our customers are used to a Tex-Mex menu. An advantage is that they have a breakfast program, which our customers wanted," he said.

His restaurant staff is currently training in Colorado and they'll be ready to open Taco John's in the second week of August.

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