

THE LONG-TIME BUSINESS MANAGER FOR A LA CROSSE PLUMBING COMPANY IS ACCUSED OF STEALING ALMOST A MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE BUSINESS OVER THE LAST DECADE...

BOND FOR 62-YEAR-OLD GARY DEML IS SET AT HALF-A-MILLION DOLLARS. INVESTIGATORS SAY DEML HAS TAKEN UP TO 150-THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR FROM BERNIE BUCHNER PLUMBING AND HEATING SINCE 2001, PUTTING MUCH OF IT INTO AN ACCOUNT FOR A COMPANY HE USED TO OWN IN SPARTA. THE BUCHNER FAMILY HAD ASSUMED THAT DEML'S COMPANY WENT OUT OF EXISTENCE WHEN THEY HIRED HIM. A CRIMINAL COMPLAINT SAYS THE OWNERS WERE UNAWARE THAT BUCHNER PLUMBING HAD NOT PAID ANY TAXES IN THE LAST NINE YEARS, AND OWED A MILLION-AND-A-HALF DOLLARS JUST TO THE I-R-S.