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EDITOR'S PICK

## DBi closes, more than 1,500 lose jobs

By Kelly Monitz Staff Writer  
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DBi Services' corporate headquarters in Hazleton sit idle Saturday morning, less than 24 hours after employees nat  
Kelly Monitz / Staff photo

HAZLETON — A lone worker loaded his belongings from an open garage at DBi Services' corporate headquarters on North Conahan Drive Saturday morning.

The worker, who spoke on condition of anonymity, found out he no longer had a job at 4:30 p.m. Friday afternoon.

The company was closing, effective immediately.

"We had an idea ..." he said, his voice trailing off. The company sent out a company-wide notification at noon about a meeting at 4:30 p.m. "Everyone tried to hold onto hope. At 4:37, it was over."

DBi Services is a worldwide company founded in Hazleton by Neal and Paul DeAngelo in 1978, but the company was sold in 2016. The company employed more than 1,500 people nationwide.

Hazleton Mayor Jeff Cusat said Saturday that DBi is one of the city's largest businesses, and it will be a huge hit on wage taxes, but more so, on employees who suddenly lost their jobs.

"It's a shame people are losing their jobs," he said, noting that he did not have any additional information and only heard mention of it Friday night.

Employees saw the writing on the wall, but didn't want to believe a company with a more than 40-year history in the community and locations in 45 states would just close, the worker said.

The company blamed COVID-19 for its demise, but workers knew vendors weren't getting paid and upper management kept shifting, he said.

He placed an order for materials on Friday — no one told him not to do so.

"There wasn't even a whisper," he said.

Worse, he knew people that left other jobs to work at DBi. A friend of his did, and ended up laid off two weeks ago. They told him that they didn't have work for him, yet the company continued to post job openings online, he said.

"We were hoping the infrastructure bill would pass," he said. "We're an infrastructure company. Roads and bridges. That's what we do."



Now, workers must wait for an email that will tell them the next steps. A few staffers will remain to facilitate the process, the man said. He was told they should be able to collect unemployment.

People posting on social media, however, said that they've been locked out of the company email. A Facebook group, "DBi – Employees Fighting Back," has also formed.

Some employees wondered what to do with company vehicles, and some abandoned them where they sat, fearing lack of insurance, posts said.

The Standard-Speaker attempted to reach out to the company via phone and an email request through the company website. A "live chat" on the website responded with general company information and said to contact a recruiter for more about the company's financial information.


Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce President Mary Malone could not be reached for comment about the closure, or if the chamber had any services that could help displaced workers.

Former DBi owner Neal DeAngelo could not be reached for comment.

Contact the writer: [kmonitz@standardspeaker.com](mailto:kmonitz@standardspeaker.com); 570-501-3589

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## Job fair set to help out-of-work DBi employees





## Class action lawsuit filed in DBi closing

Kelly Monitz

Kelly Monitz is a staff writer at the Standard-Speaker, Read More...

