



“Two Ace Hardware stores to close in Norman”

David Hertz

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The stores in Purcell and Blanchard will remain open. The communities have a strong home improvement market but are small enough that they are "unlikely to attract big-box competition," Curnutte said.

Selling the store buildings will help the company restructure its debt and return to profitability, Curnutte said.

"When times do improve — and I think inevitably they will — those are the businesses that do really well," he said.

Don Wood, executive director of the Norman Economic Development Coalition, said the overall economic picture for Norman still is good.

The unemployment rate in the Norman area is hovering around half the national average, and Cleveland County has added jobs this year, he said.

"I don't think that closing has anything to do with the (Norman) economy," Wood said.