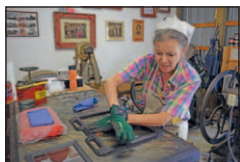


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SHAKOPEE VALLEY NEWS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 2021

BREAKING NEWS ONLINE AT WWW.SHAKOPEENEWS.COM

Low inventory, high prices



PHOTO BY JACQUELINE DEVINE

Joe Heim, store manager of Drive Appeal in Shakopee said the price for new cars is over \$30,000 and used cars are over \$20,000.

Why local auto dealers are seeing a major price surge in used cars

BY JACQUELINE DEVINE
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If you're thinking of buying a sweet new ride this summer using stimulus check savings, you might want to rethink your purchase because new and used car prices are soaring nationwide due to a global microchip shortage.

The devastating chip shortage is affecting automakers and dealerships all over the world including the Twin Cities metro leaving dealers and consumers struggling to get their hands on vehicles.

According to experts and industry leaders, the shortage of computer chips

— which modern cars need in order to operate everything from infotainment systems to special safety features and more — is being caused in large part by the pandemic, after auto factories briefly shut down production.

Low interest rates, high savings and government stimulus payments have also boosted demand.

Ford, General Motors and Chevrolet are among the hardest-hit manufacturers, according to data by Automotive News. Ford has shut down production of 325,000 vehicles including nearly 110,000 units of the popular F-Series pickup truck. GM and Stellantis had to abandon 278,000 and 252,000 vehicles, respectively. Following

the F-Series, the most impacted models are the Jeep Cherokee, which shut down 98,584 units, Chevrolet Equinox lost 81,833 units, Chevy Malibu lost 56,929 units and the Ford Explorer, which had to forfeit 46,766 units.

"It's hard to get anything with this chip shortage on all the vehicles, these new vehicles haven't been coming out," said Michael Sjulstad, sales manager of Velishek Auto Sales in Prior Lake. "We're sitting anywhere from 85 to 100 vehicles on our lot when we usually have 130. Everybody is trying to buy inventory right now but the prices are so high it's hard to get your hands on them."

Cars to 15 ➤

Delta variant causes concern in Scott, Carver counties

'We're not out of the woods' with COVID-19, public health director says

BY EDEN TELLER
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As the COVID-19 Delta variant has ripped through southern U.S. states and caused a national surge of cases, Minnesota and the southwest Twin Cities metro area have been no exception. While nowhere near the peaks of 2020, health officials in Scott and Carver counties are keeping close tabs on case numbers and the future.

When Gov. Tim Walz lifted the state's mask mandate on July 1, COVID-19 cases were on a steep downward trend, thanks to the three vaccines that have been widely available to the public since spring 2021. However, as Covid cases have surged upward again since early July, Scott County Public Health Director Lisa Brodsky sees a worrying trend.

"I believe that we're going to see a continued rise in cases. I have no reason to believe that it's going to be different than it was previously, though it may be worse because we know the Delta variant is much more contagious and carries a higher viral load," Brodsky said.

Unlike in the early months of the pandemic, Brodsky estimated that around one in four new Scott County COVID-19 cases

Delta to 4 ➤

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