

COLD

FROM A1

Car wash owner Jeremy Lamine said he and his employees often close the business on winter days when temperatures fall to sub-freezing levels. Customers, however, sometimes cannot resist giving their vehicles a fresh cleaning, even when they run the risk of freezing the doors shut.

"It happens more than you think," Lamine said, adding his advice to customers: "Use your best judgment."

Temperatures in the Shawano area had dropped well below freezing last week when Hutter decided to get an early start to his day by running his Ford Fusion over to the car wash.

Hutter, a nursing student, said he likes to keep his car looking good — even during winter — and he often finds car washes that are heated inside.

So about 6:30 a.m.

Dec. 14, he pulled into Best Wash and deposited \$10 for a deluxe drive-through wash. When the wash cycle was over, the automated exit door did not open. Hutter climbed out of his car and tried unsuccessfully to open the door by pressing a button and by lifting the door manually.

"I knew it was a cold morning," he recalled, "but I didn't anticipate the doors getting frozen shut."

Turning off his vehicle to avoid dangerous fumes inside the enclosed chamber, Hutter finally used his cellphone and called the police for help. He estimated that he was stuck inside the frozen car wash for about 25 minutes.

He thanked the police officer who freed him, and offered to reimburse the officer for the \$4 cost of getting the car wash entrance to swing back open.

"I shook his hand," Hutter said. "We both kind of laughed about it."