



Hermantown Police Department  
5111 Maple Grove Road, Hermantown, MN 55811  
218.729.1200 // cops@hermantownmn.com

# AROUND TOWN

During the week of 06/20/21 to 06/26/21, the Hermantown PD had 227 calls.  
The following are selected incidents HPD responded to this week.

## Chief

Jim Crace

## Commanders

Mark Gunderson  
Jon Esterbrooks

## Sergeants

Griffin Pfeiffer - K9  
Jon Pernu - K9

## Detective

Jake Williams  
Jeff Dwyer

## Officers

Jason Salo  
Lisa Volk  
Tim Battaglia  
Jon Enright  
Erika Johnson - SRO  
Quinn Mischke  
Olivia Gottschald  
Jonathan Stracek  
Andrew Leibel

## K-9 Officers

Tuuko  
Jack

## Records

Jessica Sorensen  
Dana Ross  
Samantha Knapp

### Driving Under the Influence

At approximately 3:15 p.m. on 06/20/21, officers were dispatched to an accident at Midway Road and Highway. The caller stated she had been rear-ended and she believed the other driver was intoxicated. The 31-year-old woman and her children, who were in the vehicle with her, later went to the hospital to be evaluated for pain from the accident. Officer Volk was on her way to the scene when she observed the suspect vehicle, a GMC Sierra, exiting the roundabout onto Maple Grove Road. The GMC had a damaged front grill. She performed a traffic stop on the vehicle and made contact with the 49-year-old driver. The man displayed signs of intoxication and admitted to drinking at the Buffalo House. When asked if there was anyone else in the vehicle with him besides the dog, he said there was a cat. The cat was never located. The man admitted to hitting the vehicle in front of him, stating they stopped really fast. He had a hard time locating his insurance card and driver's license in his wallet. Officer Volk requested that he perform field sobriety testing and he said several times that there was "no point" and that he had too much to drink. While being processed at the Hermantown Police Department, the man provided one breath test sample, which was over 3x the legal limit. He refused to provide a second sample, despite being told that two breath samples are required for a complete test. He was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for 3<sup>rd</sup> degree refusal and 4<sup>th</sup> degree DWI.

On 06/21/21 at 11:23 p.m., officers were dispatched to an accident in the 4200 block of Lavaque Road. The caller stated a car was in his yard and had hit a mailbox and power pole. When the vehicle had driven into the power pole, it snapped in three locations, causing power lines to hang low in places and lay across the road. Power was reported to be out at multiple residences. The 25-year-old driver stated he was coming from McKenzie's Bar and thought he was okay to drive. He said he had been at the bar since 3 p.m. He said he had four beers, then stated he had six. He also said he had chips and dip there. Once away from the power lines, the man was checked by first responders, as he blood running down both arms and smeared across his forehead. Officer Johnson had the man perform field sobriety testing; she stopped the one leg test partway through, as the man lost his balance multiple times and she was afraid he would fall. A preliminary breath test showed a reading of .22% blood alcohol content. Later, while being processed at the Hermantown Police Department, the man was performing a breath test but was not providing a slow steady breath, as instructed. At times during the sample, he would hardly expel air, would puff out his cheeks, and would blow around the mouthpiece instead of in it. He ultimately was able complete the test adequately. He was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for 3<sup>rd</sup> degree DWI and .08 or more. His vehicle was towed from the scene.

Officer Stracek was on patrol for a Toward Zero Death traffic enforcement shift on 06/24/21 at 11:05 p.m. when he observed a vehicle flash its high beams at him. As the vehicle passed him, he observed in his side mirror that the vehicle drifted toward the fog line and back toward the center line. The vehicle then turned onto another road and accelerated at a high rate of speed. It appeared that the vehicle almost drove past the turn and had to hit the brakes to navigate the turn. Officer Stracek turned and followed the vehicle, observing it cross the fog line and correct back to the center line several times. He performed a traffic stop and as he approached the vehicle, the 57-year-old male driver turned on the AC and turned the fan to high. The man performed field sobriety testing, including a preliminary breath test that



Hermantown Police Department  
5111 Maple Grove Road, Hermantown, MN 55811  
218.729.1200 // [cops@hermantownmn.com](mailto:cops@hermantownmn.com)

# AROUND TOWN

## Chief

Jim Crace

## Commanders

Mark Gunderson  
Jon Esterbrooks

## Sergeants

Griffin Pfeiffer - K9  
Jon Pernu - K9

## Detective

Jake Williams  
Jeff Dwyer

## Officers

Jason Salo  
Lisa Volk  
Tim Battaglia  
Jon Enright  
Erika Johnson - SRO  
Quinn Mischke  
Olivia Gottschald  
Jonathan Stracek  
Andrew Leibel

## K-9 Officers

Tuuko  
Jack

## Records

Jessica Sorensen  
Dana Ross  
Samantha Knapp

resulted in a reading of .153% blood alcohol content. The man was issued a citation for 4<sup>th</sup> degree DWI and .08 or more.

On 06/26/21 at approximately 12:30 a.m., Officer Stracek observed a vehicle in the Subaru lot that was running with its headlights on. He approached the vehicle and observed a female laying down in the driver's seat crying. As he spoke with the woman, he detected a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage on her breath and she was slurring her words. The 40-year-old told Officer Stracek that she and her husband had been drinking and had gotten into a fight. She stated she left the apartment in her vehicle to get some separation, first driving to the Fleet Farm lot, then down Market Street to the Subaru lot. The woman agreed to perform field sobriety testing and submitted to a preliminary breath test with a result of .106% blood alcohol content. The woman was cited for 4<sup>th</sup> degree DWI and .08 or more.

### Accidents

On the morning of 06/23/21, Officer Salo responded to Miller Trunk Highway and Ugstad Road for the report of a two-vehicle accident. A 55-year-old man was traveling north on the highway when an oncoming vehicle turned left in front of him. That vehicle was towing a boat, which was dislodged during the collision. The 76-year-old driver of that vehicle stated he began his turn when his flashing arrow turned solid yellow. He said he thought the other driver would then have a red light. He was cited for failing to yield to oncoming traffic. The northbound driver reported pain in his chest at the scene and was checked by first responders. Both vehicles and the boat were towed.

At 12:40 p.m. on 06/23/21, officers were advised of a vehicle rollover in the 5400 block of Highway 2. Officer Salo spoke to the 34-year-old driver and 28-year-old passenger, who both stated they were driving when the Ford Explorer started shaking and pulled hard to the right and off the road, causing the vehicle to roll several times. Officer Salo saw a single skid mark in the road before looking at the vehicle and locating a broken control arm. It appeared that the control arm broke while driving, causing the accident. All six occupants of the vehicle, including four children, were shaken up and had cuts and bruises. Several went to the hospital by ambulance and others were driven by family. Damage to the vehicle was disabling.







Hermantown Police Department  
5111 Maple Grove Road, Hermantown, MN 55811  
218.729.1200 // cops@hermantownmn.com

# AROUND TOWN

## Chief

Jim Crace

## Commanders

Mark Gunderson  
Jon Esterbrooks

## Sergeants

Griffin Pfeiffer - K9  
Jon Pernu - K9

## Detective

Jake Williams  
Jeff Dwyer

## Officers

Jason Salo  
Lisa Volk  
Tim Battaglia  
Jon Enright  
Erika Johnson - SRO  
Quinn Mischke  
Olivia Gottschald  
Jonathan Stracek  
Andrew Leibel

## K-9 Officers

Tuuko  
Jack

## Records

Jessica Sorensen  
Dana Ross  
Samantha Knapp

On 06/25/21, just before 11 a.m., officers responded to the intersection of Miller Trunk Highway and Silver Maple Drive for a 3-vehicle accident with injuries. After speaking to witnesses and those involved in the accident, officers determined that a Toyota Highlander driven by an 84-year-old man had turned left in front of a southbound GMC Sierra driven by a 54-year-old man, who had a green light. The Sierra was pushed into a nearby Silverado. The driver of the Highlander was issued a citation for failure to obey red turn signal. That man and his driver were conscious, but unable to provide statements. They were transported by ambulance. The 49-year-old driver of the Silverado complained of shoulder pain and tingling in her fingers; she was transported by private vehicle to a local hospital. The Sierra driver complained of neck pain but was not transported.



## Theft

On 06/20/21 at 4:42 p.m., Walmart reported that a male shoplifter fled into the parking lot. Officer Salo located the suspect, who admitted to fleeing from loss prevention staff. During a pat-down for weapons, Officer Salo located a pocket knife, two needles, small sharp metal objects, and a plastic container with residue. Loss prevention advised that the man had stolen eight items with a total value of \$111.13. The man was cited for theft and was trespassed from Walmart properties.

At 7:15 a.m. on 06/21/21, Officer Volk was advised that a construction trailer had been broken into overnight and \$2100 in tools had been taken. The reporting party stated that it appeared the suspects tried to hook up to the trailer to steal it. The following morning, the man called to advise that a friend had seen a suspicious gray van milling around the property before 5:30 a.m. on 06/21/21. He was able to provide a license plate of the vehicle. This incident is under investigation.

On 06/21/21 at 8:45 a.m., officers were advised of a shoplifting incident at Walmart. Loss prevention observed a male conceal a pair of gloves, a bottle of Zyrtec, and a shaving razor in his waistband. The reporting party said that that man was acting strangely, including yelling at himself while looking at oil filters. The suspect gave the gloves back before fleeing the lot in a blue van. Officer Volk located the vehicle traveling south on Loberg Avenue and attempted to perform a traffic stop, but the van continued at a slower pace without stopping. The driver was making lots of movements with his hands, waving out the window and throwing things out of the vehicle. The 35-year-old man's driving conduct was very poor, as the vehicle was all over the road and he was slow to react to the traffic lights. Officers located the allergy medicine in the vehicle, but did not find the razor. During the vehicle search, a recently used hypodermic needle was located. The man later told Officer Enright that he used to use heroin, but said he hadn't used in over a year. He said he takes Suboxone daily, although he had not taken that day's dose yet. He also said he smoke marijuana but hadn't in two days. Officer Enright is a certified drug recognition evaluator and after an evaluation of the man, believed that he was under the



Hermantown Police Department  
5111 Maple Grove Road, Hermantown, MN 55811  
218.729.1200 // cops@hermantownmn.com

# AROUND TOWN

## Chief

Jim Crace

## Commanders

Mark Gunderson  
Jon Esterbrooks

## Sergeants

Griffin Pfeiffer - K9  
Jon Pernu - K9

## Detective

Jake Williams  
Jeff Dwyer

## Officers

Jason Salo  
Lisa Volk  
Tim Battaglia  
Jon Enright  
Erika Johnson - SRO  
Quinn Mischke  
Olivia Gottschald  
Jonathan Stracek  
Andrew Leibel

## K-9 Officers

Tuuko  
Jack

## Records

Jessica Sorensen  
Dana Ross  
Samantha Knapp

influence of a stimulant and cannabis. The man was transported to a local hospital, where a search warrant for a blood draw was executed. All charges pertaining to this incident are pending the results of the blood analysis.

On the afternoon of 06/21/21, a Haines Road resident reported that her daughter's pink Mongoose bicycle had been stolen from in front of their house.

On 06/22/21, Menards reported a shoplifting incident that occurred on 06/08/21. The male suspect pushed out a cart containing a circular saw and angle grinder with a value of \$498 before leaving in a truck. The reporting party said there was another incident on 06/12/21 at the West Duluth Menards involving the same suspect. Officer Leibel also took the report of a shoplifting at the Hermantown Menards on 06/15/21 involving the same suspect truck. Sgt. Pernu spoke to the wife of the truck's registered owner, who stated that her 35-year-old son has possession of the truck. The son was positively identified by Menards surveillance video and photos. Hermantown PD Detectives will coordinate with the Duluth Police Department and appropriate charges for all three cases will then be determined.

On 06/22/21, Walmart reported that there were five instances between 06/01/21 and 06/15/21 in which an employee had either put items directly into bag or under ringing items at the self-checks. The stolen items totaled \$33.30. The first theft incident was uncovered when the employee left work early without punching out, prompting staff to check surveillance video. The 17-year-old employee admitted to the thefts, but attempted to deflect blame onto a friend that she said influenced her. She was issued a citation for theft, terminated from her employment, and left with a parent.

Officer Stracek was on scene at Walmart on 06/22/21, when an employee reported a theft. The male suspect ran out the general merchandise doors and Officer Stracek ran after him. When Officer Stracek commanded him to stop and identified himself as police, the man changed directions and continued running, ignoring several orders to stop. Officer Stracek then advised the man that he would be tased if he did not stop; the man stopped and put his hands up. Loss prevention staff stated that the man selected a backpack and placed men's clothing inside before attempting to leave the store. The value of the items was \$121.05. The man was cited for theft. He was taken into custody for a felony probation violation warrant out of Carlton County.

On 06/24/21, a Miller Trunk auto business reported that six vehicles on the property had license plates stolen.

On 06/25/21, Officer Volk was advised that someone attempted to break into residents' mailboxes at the Timber Ridge Townhomes. The frames were pried open, but no access was gained to the interior of the mailboxes.

On 06/26/21, several residents reported vehicle prowls. These incidents occurred on Dahl Road, Jaime Drive, and Joshua Lane.