



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 12/26/21 to 01/01/22, the Hermantown PD had 138 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

Suspicious Activity

On 12/30/21 at 9:48 p.m., an Oak Ridge Drive resident reported a suspicious vehicle sitting on the dead end road for least half an hour. Officer Mischke made contact with the 25-year-old male in the vehicle. The man stated he lived in the neighborhood at his ex-girlfriend's house, but no one was home and he did not have a key to get in. He said he should have just waited in the driveway, but decided to watch videos in his car at the dead end.

Disturbance

On 12/28/21 at 11:42 a.m., Menards staff reported a disturbance involving a vendor. Officer Leibel spoke to the manager, who stated that the vendor, a 42-year-old man, was stocking a shelf when he noticed a customer standing in the aisle as if to suggest that the man was in the way. The vendor moved over to allow the customer to walk by and said, "You could have gone around." An argument ensued between the man and customer; the manager was told that the vendor also told the customer he hopes they die of Covid. The manager confronted the vendor and told him to leave before he was finishing stocking. Officer Leibel met with the vendor in the parking lot. The man admitted to telling the customer that they could have gone around, but denied making the comment about Covid. The man was trespassed from Menards for one year. There was similar behavior from the man in October when he ordered dinner from Outback and DoorDash staff did not pick it up like they were supposed to. When the man went to Outback to get the food, he got angry at employees and began to yell and swear before throwing his food on the ground. He was trespassed from Outback at that time.

Possession of Stolen Property

On 12/27/21 at approximately 3:45 p.m., Sgt. Pernu discovered that a Jeep SUV at the gas pumps at Kwik Trip had been reported stolen out of Duluth on 12/22/21. As the Jeep left the lot, Sgt. Pernu began to follow it and wait for assisting officers. After performing a traffic stop and detaining the 37-year-old male driver and 35-year-old female passenger, Sgt. Pernu spoke to the Duluth officer that took the report of the stolen vehicle. He confirmed it had been reported stolen, but also stated that the victim changed her story on the time frame of last seeing the vehicle. In addition, police records indicated that the male driver had access to the vehicle in September 2021. The passenger told Officer Stracek that the man had picked her up and they had gone to a car wash in the vehicle before stopping at Kwik Trip to get some snacks. The man told Officer Leibel that he and his fiancé had purchased the vehicle in May 2021 but had not transferred the registration, as the person they got it from had given them the wrong title. Reports were sent to the prosecuting attorney's office for possible charges of possessing stolen property.



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Accident

On 12/27/21 at approximately 7:30 a.m., Officer Stracek responded to Midway Road and Highway 2 for an accident with heavy damage to both vehicles involved. A 31-year-old woman driving a Nissan Armada said she was traveling through a green light when a Chevy Silverado struck her. She stated she was sore, but had no injuries. She also said three children in the car, all under age 6, were shaken up but okay. A witness confirmed that the truck's 39-year-old driver went around a vehicle stopped for the red light and struck the Armada. The truck's driver was cited for failing to obey a traffic control device.



Just after 1 p.m. on 12/31/21, officer Salo responded to the Walmart parking lot after being advised that a pedestrian had been hit by a car. The 74-year-old woman said she was putting a cart in the rack when the vehicle backed up into her and pinned her between the vehicle and cart rack. She reported bruising and pain to her torso and was transported to a local hospital. The 70-year-old male driver stated he was backing out of a parking spot when his foot slipped from the brake to the gas.

Theft

On the afternoon of 12/31/21, Walmart loss prevention reported that a male and female had come to the store around 3 p.m. and stole several items. The pair proceeded to the self-check, where they began to bag the merchandise without scanning any of it. The female then pulled up the Walmart+ app and pretended to pay for the items, but instead backed out of the app and left without paying. While viewing surveillance video, Officer Salo immediately recognized the female from previous incidents involving shoplifting, suspicious vehicles, and drug use. The male appeared to be consistent with her known boyfriend, although he was wearing mask in the video. Officer Salo checked pawn records and discovered that the 28-year-old woman had pawned several of the items just a little over an hour after stealing them. The items she pawned included two Lego sets, a jump started, a web cam, and three gaming split packs. Her 35-year-old boyfriend was involved in pawning the items with her. They received \$147. The value of the 13 items taken from Walmart was \$737.03. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney for charges of gross misdemeanor theft.