



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 02/06/22 to 02/12/22, the Hermantown PD had 175 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

On 02/07/22 at 12:54 a.m., Officer Stracek was on patrol near Hermantown and Stebner Roads when he observed a vehicle quickly turn onto a side road. The vehicle made several evasive turns but Officer Stracek ultimately located it near Trinity Avenue and Anderson Road and performed a traffic stop for elusive behavior and suspended object. The 19-year-old female driver admitted to trying to lose Officer Stracek multiple times. She took down an air freshener and necklace from the rearview mirror and provided an out of state driver's license. Officer Stracek noted a strong odor of alcoholic beverage; the driver was sucking on a mint and trying to avoid eye contact. She ultimately admitted to drinking at a local bar, stating she had a fake ID. She provided a preliminary breath test sample with a reading of .059% blood alcohol content. After performing field sobriety testing, the woman was issued a citation for underage drinking and driving.

At 1:55 a.m. on 02/09/22, Officer Stracek was traveling westbound on St. Louis River Road when he observed a Rav 4 in the eastbound lane that appeared to be going too fast for the conditions of the roadway, which were icy and snow-covered. He clocked the vehicle at 37 mph in a 30 mph zone. He turned around and attempted to catch up to the vehicle. He could see tracks on the roadway that indicated the vehicle wasn't traveling in a straight line. As the vehicle slowed for the stop sign at Getchell Road, it crossed into the westbound lane before turning north. The Rav 4 slowed but did not stop at the Morris Thomas Road stop sign and Officer Stracek initiated a traffic stop. The female driver had a hard time rolling her window down, opening the backseat window before correcting and rolling down the driver's window. When asked why she was swerving, the 27-year-old woman responded "I'm almost home" as she started crying. Officer Stracek observed that the woman appeared to be showing signs of intoxication and he asked how much she had to drink. She stated, "a little bit, a lot a bit." She said she felt okay to drive until she was pulled over, then she started to feel buzzed up and tingly. She performed field sobriety testing and her blood alcohol content was .197% on her preliminary breath test. She had a previous DWI conviction in 2018. Reports were sent in for charges of 2nd degree DWI, .08 or more, failing to stop for a stop sign, and speed.

On 02/12/22 at 11:23 p.m., Officer Battaglia was advised of a vehicle in the ditch on Hermantown Road. He responded to the scene and located a Dodge Ram in the ditch with one male occupant. The 43-year-old driver immediately told Officer Battaglia that he fell asleep and went into the ditch. He admitted to coming from a bar in Proctor, but denied drinking. After the man got out of his truck to walk up to the road, he grabbed snow and put it in his mouth. The man was unsteady on his feet and fell into the roadway as he came over the pile of snow on the side of the road from the plow. Although the man stated he was willing to perform field sobriety testing, he did not follow instructions to perform the tests correctly and he refused to submit to a preliminary breath test. At the police department, he stated he wished to consult with an attorney, but instead spent the time attempting to argue with Officer Battaglia. When asked if he was done attempting to consult an attorney, the man would only state, "I'll maintain my innocence." Officer Battaglia then asked if he was willing to take a breath test. He continually stated that he would take a blood test, but Officer Battaglia advised him that he was only being offered a breath test. The man was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for 3rd degree test refusal and 4th degree DWI.



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Drugs

On 02/08/22 at 12:11 a.m., Officer Stracek observed a northbound vehicle on Ugstad Road travelling 39 mph in a 30 mph zone. He performed a traffic stop on the vehicle, which pulled into a driveway. The 32-year-old driver said she was lost and her plan was to knock on the door and ask directions to Walmart. Officer Stracek observed a glass pipe with white residue in the back seat of the vehicle. He retrieved the pipe and the woman stated it wasn't her and that it belonged to a cousin. The woman then stated she was headed to her aunt's house in Hermantown. Officer Stracek conducted a vehicle search and located other drug paraphernalia, suspected marijuana, Narcan, and hypodermic needles. The woman admitted to being on probation. She was told there would be possible charges and released. At the Hermantown Police Department, Officer Stracek tested the white residue from a scale located in the woman's purse, which tested positive for methamphetamine. The unpackaged weight of the marijuana was 7.8 grams. This incident is under investigation.

Disturbance

On 02/10/22, Walmart reported two trespassing incidents. A 39-year-old woman had been trespassed from the store on 02/03/22 during a shoplifting incident. Loss prevention provided video footage of the woman at the store on 02/06/22 and 02/08/22. Citations were mailed to the woman for trespassing.

Theft

On 02/06/22 at 12:12 a.m., Officer Stracek was on patrol when he observed a minivan attempting to get unstuck from the ditch in the 4100 block of Ugstad Road. As he approached, the vehicle freed itself and started to travel south on Ugstad. Officer Stracek then observed the vehicle roll through the stop sign and accelerate at a high rate of speed onto Maple Grove Road. Officer Stracek attempted to catch the vehicle and clocked its speed at 70 mph. He initiated a pursuit on the vehicle, which turned onto Getchell Road and pulled over. Officer Stracek conducted a felony stop on the vehicle with his handgun drawn. The driver then placed the vehicle back into drive and fled from the traffic stop. During the subsequent pursuit, Officer Stracek got into position to PIT the vehicle, but oncoming traffic made the maneuver unsafe. With road conditions deteriorating, the pursuit was terminated. At 12:36 a.m., a Duluth resident reported that a van had pulled into her driveway. Duluth officers attempted to follow the fresh footprints in the snow, but it appeared the suspect had been picked up a few blocks away. DNA swabs were taken from the vehicle's steering wheel, door handle, and shifter. Just after 8 a.m., staff from a Hermantown group home reported that the company van had been taken overnight. The reporting party said that a staff member was supposed to do checks every half hour or house, but did not notice the resident missing until 4:30 this morning. He said the resident had distracted the staff member and grabbed the keys for the van. This incident is under investigation.

At 2:44 a.m. on 02/09/22, a 20-year-old woman reported a vehicle prowler at the Holiday Inn Express. She said she believed her car was entered between 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. on 02/08/22. She stated she must have left her vehicle unlocked because none of the windows were broken. A work shirt and sweatshirt were taken, along with two care packages, a Halloween blanket, and an ice scraper.