



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 02/20/22 to 02/26/22, 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

Disturbance

On 02/25/22 at 12:48 a.m., a 37-year-old female reported that she had been bitten by her roommate's dog. Upon arrival, Officer Michke spoke to the woman, who was yelling at her 51-year-old roommate about a variety of issues, including his dog biting her finger. The Hermantown Volunteer Fire Department wrapped her finger in gauze and advised that it was a small cut on the cuticle of the finger. Officer Michke noted that the German Shepard did not appear to be aggressive or neglected. The woman said she had helped train the dog off and on, but refused to tell Officer Michke how the dog bite happened. The 29-year-old son of the man advised that he didn't see the dog bite but that he has seen the woman yell and be aggressive to the dog in the past. Shortly after officers left the residence, the younger man called 911 to report that the woman was flipping out and throwing stuff everywhere. Officer Michke arrived back at the house and observed several household items including a pan and bowl were on the ground and some of the items were broken. The woman initially denied throwing anything, but then made a statement about how the older man had thrown things "too." The older male stated that he had been hit by the items the woman was throwing. Officer Mischke observed several marks on the man's head, including a goose egg above his eye. The man and his son both stated it was from being hit with the thrown items. The woman was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail and reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of gross misdemeanor domestic assault.

Driving Under the Influence

At 2:15 a.m. on 02/20/22, Officer Stracek began traveling behind a GMC Sierra registering to a Duluth resident near the intersection of Maple Grove and Lavaque Roads. The vehicle then turned south onto Stebner Road and quickly turned onto Whitetail Drive. Due to the time of night and the vehicle not belonging to the neighborhood, Officer Stracek turned onto Whitetail Drive, as well. The vehicle turned around and turned onto northbound Stebner Road, failing to signal properly. Officer Stracek performed a traffic stop and made contact with the 51-year-old driver, who had glossy eyes, slurred speech, and disoriented behavior. The man said he was headed toward Piedmont from a local bar. When asked why was coming from the opposite direction, he said he dropped his friend off at home, despite stating earlier that his friend was picked up at the bar by an Uber. Officer Stracek asked the man to step out of his vehicle to make sure he was okay to drive. The man questioned what would happen if he refused and claimed he had been with an attorney earlier that night who told him to refuse all tests. He ultimately agreed to perform field sobriety testing, including a preliminary breath test that resulted in a reading of .145% blood alcohol content. The man was issued a citation for 4th degree DWI, .08 or more, and improper signal.

On 02/21/22, just after 2 a.m., Officer Stracek observed a sedan with a burnt-out brake light turn westbound onto Anderson Road. As he followed the vehicle, he observed it cross the centerline multiple times. The vehicle then failed to make a complete stop at the stop sign at Stebner Road. He conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle and the 21-year-old driver said she was driving her mother's vehicle and the tires were really bad. She admitted to knowing she did not have a valid driver's license and said she was dropping her passenger off and heading back to her mom's house in Piedmont. When asked where she was dropping her passenger off, she replied that he lives by the Miller Hill Mall, which is opposite of the direction she was traveling. When Officer Stracek pointed this out, she replied, "I don't know." The woman admitted to having a vodka Redbull approximately two hours prior and her passenger volunteered that she had also had a "cherry bomb" earlier in the night; the driver said they had been at a Superior bar. The female driver performed field sobriety testing.



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Her preliminary breath test showed a blood alcohol content of .156%. She was cited for 4th degree DWI, .08 or more, driving after revocation, brake light violation, failing to drive in a single lane, and possession of an open bottle.

On 02/23/22, just before 12:30 a.m., Officer Stracek conducted a routine license plate query on a Ford Escape and noted that the owner had an expired driver's license. He performed a traffic stop on the vehicle and made contact with the 29-year-old driver, identified as the owner, and explained that her license was expired. While speaking to the woman, he detected a strong odor of alcoholic beverage emitting from the vehicle and noted that the woman's eyes were red and glossy. She told Officer Stracek that she was headed to drop off her two passengers, who had been at a bar in Proctor. The woman had her driver's license in her hand but put it back into her wallet and Officer Stracek had to ask her again to hand it to him. When asked how much she had to drink, the driver said "not at all" and told Officer Stracek she was picking up her drunk boyfriend and friend. The woman stepped out of the vehicle to perform field sobriety testing and Officer Stracek noted that the odor of alcoholic beverage became significantly stronger. Officer Stracek asked again how much she had to drink and she shook her head no. When asked what a breath test would show, she hesitated and said, "honestly, I think I had a couple of drinks...I won't pull tabs tonight." She stated that she had a couple "sips" of her friend's drink. The woman's preliminary breath test resulted in a reading of .142% blood alcohol content. She later admitted to having a seltzer or two. She was cited for 4th degree DWI, .08 or more, and expired driver's license.

Traffic

Just after 8 a.m. on 02/22/22, Officer Leibel observed a vehicle traveling on Stebner Road with an unfamiliar license plate branded with "Minnesota." He also observed that the brake lights did not appear to be illuminated. Upon making a traffic stop on the vehicle, he cleared the rear license plate of snow. It had an eight character license plate number and was clearly in a format not issued by the State of Minnesota. The bottom of the plate read "American State National – Not for Hire." Officer Leibel made contact with the driver, who would only lower the window 1/4 of the way down, and advised him that his brake lights appeared to be inoperable. When advised that Officer Leibel had never seen the plates that were displayed on his vehicle before, the driver replied, "I'm traveling" and further stated he was "under contract." The man refused to provide his driver's license, stating it was "private property" and instead gave Officer Leibel his passport card. The man stated several times that he was not going to answer any questions. He was courteous, yet defiant, for the rest of Officer Leibel's interaction with him. The 53-year-old man was cited for expired tabs and no Minnesota registration/plates and transported to his place of employment. The morning before the traffic stop, the man had been involved in a shoplifting incident at Walmart and had been pulled over while driving a different vehicle. Loss Prevention had reported that the man had selected a Bluetooth speaker that was on clearance for \$256.50. The suspect was observed placing a \$6.00 clearance sticker on the speaker. The man then went through the self-check and purchased five clearance items for \$31.26, including the speaker. The man gave the speaker back when confronted, but left the store before law enforcement arrived. When officers made contact with him during the traffic stop, the man denied stealing and claimed the \$6.00 clearance sticker was already on the speaker. He said he did not nothing wrong and that he never left with the item. The man recorded his interaction with Officer Williams on his cell phone. He was cited for theft and driving after suspension.