



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 02/27/22 to 03/05/22, the Hermantown PD had 129 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 03/01/22 at 1:20 a.m., Officer Stracek observed a vehicle without tail lights. As the vehicle travelled southbound on Miller Trunk Highway, the driver had his foot on the brake so his brake lights would be illuminated. Officer Stracek made contact with the 28-year-old driver, who admitted his tail lights were out. He said he was homeless and was trying to find a place to park and go to sleep. Officer Stracek observed a sandwich bag of suspected marijuana on the passenger seat with a glass pipe. The man admitted to snorting meth that morning and said he was trying to quit. A baggie with suspected methamphetamine was located on the floor of the vehicle, along with a baggie of LSD. In the man's pocket were two additional baggies of methamphetamine. The man performed field sobriety testing and was placed under arrest for DWI. Charges are pending the results of a blood test and further testing of the drugs located in the vehicle.

At approximately 11:40 p.m. on 03/01/22, Officer Leibel was traveling southbound on Miller Trunk Highway when a vehicle in the left turn lane stopped suddenly in the middle of the intersection even though the turn arrow was green. He noted that the vehicle owner was born in 1937 and pulled behind the vehicle, as he thought the elderly owner may be lost. As he pulled behind the vehicle, the turn arrow again turned green and the vehicle remained stopped in the middle of the intersection. He approached the vehicle on foot to check the welfare of the driver. The turn arrow turned green once again. He noted a female in a driver's seat with a cell phone in her hand observing an app similar to GPS. At this point, the female looked up and noticed the light was green. As Officer Leibel was about to knock on the driver's window, the female continued driving through the intersection and back onto southbound Miller Trunk Highway without signaling her change of course. He activated his emergency lights and the vehicle's speed began to slow at a very delayed pace before stopping in the middle of the left passing lane of southbound Miller Trunk Highway. When Officer Leibel approached the vehicle, the female was looking directly ahead and would not initially acknowledge his presence. The woman admitted to drinking that evening and submitted to field sobriety testing. Her preliminary breath test registered .195% blood alcohol content. Reports were sent to the prosecuting attorney for charges of 3rd degree DWI, .08 or more, improper change of course, and failing to yield to an emergency vehicle.

On 03/05/22, just before 9:30 p.m., Officer Stracek observed a running Ford pickup parked next to the Haines Road Kwik Trip with three young children unattended inside. The tabs on the vehicle had expired in November 2021. The vehicle left the parking lot with rigid and jerky movements. Officer Stracek performed a traffic stop on Market Street and made contact with the 38-year-old driver. After he had her step away from the vehicle and children, he asked how much she had to drink that night. She initially stated "one beer" but after being processed for DWI, she admitted to having two Vodka Redbulls, but stated she didn't feel the effects and felt okay to drive. The woman stated she was going to the Econo Lodge and when asked to submit to a preliminary breath test, which resulted in a reading of .215% blood alcohol content, she stated, "really, you're not going to let me go right



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there?" Three children, age 10 and under, were picked up by the grandfather of one of them. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney for charges of 2nd degree DWI, .08 or more, child endangerment, and expired tabs.

Unwanted Person

At 2 p.m. on 03/05/22, Walmart loss prevention staff reported that there was a female in the store that had been previously trespassed. The woman said she thought the trespass was expired so she could be at the store. She was unsure when she was trespassed but was certain it had been over one year. Officer Gottschald advised her that she had been trespassed in September 2021. The 28-year-old woman was cited for trespassing. She was issued a new trespass notice for a year from 03/05/22.

Theft

On the afternoon of 02/27/22, Officers Battaglia and Salo received information that a stolen vehicle was parked on Gooseberry Lane in Hermantown. They responded to the area and located the vehicle with a single occupant. When officers made contact with the 39-year-old man, he was very upset and agitated about the situation, saying that the vehicle's owner – his ex-girlfriend – had allowed him to use the vehicle. The man said he was parked in front of a relative's house because he is homeless and he was hoping to take a hot shower and get some food. During officers' contact with him and while placing him into a squad car, the man repeatedly hit his head on the windows and partition. The man told Officer Salo that his ex-girlfriend allowed him to use the vehicle two days prior, but later called him and said she would report it stolen if he didn't return it. He was ultimately lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for possession of stolen vehicle.

On 03/04/22 at 3 p.m., Officer Williams was advised that a Hermantown Road resident observed a vehicle in the ditch. Officer Williams located the 1999 Chevy Suburban with no plates on it and the ignition key inside. The vehicle listed as having expired registration from 2020 and the registered owner was a 92-year-old Aurora man. Officer Williams spoke to the man, who said the vehicle was sold at auction in 2020 to an unknown buyer. Officer Williams completed an inventory of the vehicle prior to having it towed; he located papers inside with the name of a 33-year-old Duluth woman. He was able to make contact with her and she said she never transferred the title on the Suburban and the transmission went out. She stated it had been at an auto shop for quite a long time. At this point, it was believed the vehicle had been stolen and broke down a short distance from the shop location. The woman said she was most likely not going to claim the car, as it wasn't worth much. The license plates for the vehicle were not located and were listed as being stolen.