



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 05/08/22 to 05/14/22, the Hermantown PD had 155 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

Assault

On 05/10/22 at approximately 1:30 a.m., Officer Stracek was at Kwik Trip when he observed a teenage boy walk into the store with a large duffle bag. It appeared that the boy had been crying and he told Officer Stracek that he had been in a physical fight with his dad. He said that he walked home from work, went to his room and turned on his music while he was getting ready for bed. He said that when his dad got home a short time later, he asked for the music to be turned down. The boy said that a short time later, he heard his dad and his dad's girlfriend arguing so he went and intervened. He said his dad was intoxicated and that were face-to-face with each, pushing each other away, and then his dad put him in a headlock. He later admitted to having his hands around his dad's throat and pushing him into a door handle. While driving to the residence to speak with the man, Officer Stracek located the man's girlfriend by the road. The 28-year-old woman told officers to leave her alone and she walked away. The 41-year-old man initially denied any involvement in a physical altercation, only admitting that he talked to his son about turning down his music. He eventually admitted to the altercation, stating it was all self-defense on his part. He stated that his back was bruised from being pushed into a doorknob. He admitted to putting his son in a headlock during the incident. The teenager was transported to his mother's residence. Reports have been sent to the prosecuting attorney for possible charges of domestic assault against both males.

On 05/12/22 at 8:50 p.m., officers were advised of a domestic incident at an Alpine Drive residence. Upon arriving on scene, the 64-year-old victim told Officer Mischke that he had recently taken his second vehicle back from his son after his son ran it out of gas at Kwik Trip. He said he towed the vehicle back to his house and his son still had the key. His son had initially told him he flushed the key, but then said he still had the key and he wanted \$50 for it. The older man paid him for the key and then his son told him to look closer because the key didn't belong to that car. The older man then took his 35-year-old son's phone as leverage to get his key back. He said that at this point, his son went after him, taking him to the ground and punching him several times in the head and face. He stated that he believed he had pushed and kicked his son in an attempt to get his son off him. He also said that the younger man was throwing outdoor furniture and household items. Officer Battaglia spoke to the younger man, who initially said that his dad had offered to give him \$50 for the key but that he knew he was giving him the wrong key when they did the exchange. He said that when his dad had thrown his phone and attacked him. He said the older man was throwing punches at him and he was trying to blocking them. The younger man was ultimately lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for domestic assault.

At approximately 2 a.m. on 05/14/22, a group home reported that a 17-year-old resident had walked away and refused to come back. The teenager agreed to go back to the house if a particular staff member left for the night. The staff member agreed that once they got back to the house, he would call around to see if someone would cover the rest of his shift. Sgt. Pernu ensured that the company



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van made it back to the house and cleared from the call at 2:20 a.m. At 2:50 a.m., officers were advised that the staff member had called 911 to report that the resident was coming at him with a knife. When officers arrived on scene, the 24-year-old staff member had a rake in his hands, which he later explained was to defend himself against the teenager, who had a kitchen knife and was threatening him with it. He said that when they had returned to the house earlier, the resident purposely stepped on the staff member's laptop bag and backpack. He further stated that he had contacted his supervisor, who told him no one could be called in at 2 a.m. and he needed to finish his shift. According to both the resident and the staff member, the resident became upset and took various liquids from the kitchen to pour on the staff member. These included water, ketchup, and juice. When this failed to get a reaction from the man, the resident then began throwing glass jars before picking up a broken bottle neck to chase the staff member with. The staff member ultimately went outside the house to contact a supervisor; while he was outside, the teenager took his work keys from the dining table and used them to access the kitchen knives, which are stored in the basement. The resident admitted that while he was chasing the man outside the house, he used the knife to slash multiple tires on the man's car. The teenager was lodged at the Arrowhead Juvenile Center for charges of 2nd degree assault and 1st degree criminal damage to property.

Driving Under the Influence

On 05/13/22 at 12:48 a.m., a Silverado with no front plate passed Officer Stracek's squad car. The windows were tinted and Officer Stracek was unable to see into the vehicle. After locking the vehicle's speed at 41 mph in a 30 mph zone, Officer Stracek performed a traffic stop and made contact with the 23-year-old driver. He said he was headed to a friend's house after watching the game at a Duluth bar. He admitted to having four or five beers at the bar. The man performed field sobriety testing, including a preliminary breath test that resulted in a reading of .098% blood alcohol content. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of 2nd degree DWI, .08 or more, and speeding. The man has had two prior DWIs.

Just before 2 a.m. on 05/14/22, Officer Stracek performed a traffic stop on a vehicle and made contact with the male driver, who had a cancelled driver's license inimical to public safety. This driving status means that the driver is considered a danger to others when operating a vehicle. The driver was digging in the center console when Officer Stracek approached; during a later search of the vehicle, drug paraphernalia and a baggie with methamphetamine was located in the center console. The man was displaying signs of being under the influence of a stimulant and, after performing field sobriety testing, he was transported to a local hospital for a blood draw. Officer Stracek noted that the man had eight prior DWIs and a prior felony conviction. The 53-year-old was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for 1st degree controlled substance DWI, 1st degree DWI with previous felony conviction, 5th degree possession of a controlled substance, driving after cancelation – inimical to public safety, driver's license restrictions, possession of drug paraphernalia, and ignition interlock violation.



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The crimefighter continues...

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Theft

On 05/10/22 at 6:45 p.m., Officer Gottschald was dispatched to a burglary with forced entry at a Hermantown Road residence. The 38-year-old reporting party stated he suspected his ex-girlfriend was involved. The man showed Officer Gottschald a broken basement window and door that had been kicked in. He also stated when he left for work, his dog was locked in the kennel and when he returned home, the dog was out of the kennel. The man reported a prescription medication had been taken, along with garbage bags of clothing belonging to his ex-girlfriend. He later advised Officer Gottschald that a pack of diapers was missing and that he noticed someone had made a sandwich and taken a shower at his house on 05/10/22. He said the key for his garage was taken off the hook and a few items of clothing belonging to the daughter he shares with his ex-girlfriend had been taken. He also said that two scratch off tickets and a banana that had previously been at his house had been found in his daughter's diaper bag that he shares with his ex. He also said he located an envelope with his ex-girlfriend's name on it approximately 20 feet from the broken basement window. Officer Gottschald spoke with the 32-year-old ex-girlfriend, who said she went to the man's house on 05/10/22 to see if there was brake fluid in the garage. She said she looked through a garage window. She admitted to trying to get into the residence with the house key she had, but was unable to due to the man changing the locks after she moved out. She denied making entry into the house.

At approximately 10:30 p.m. on 05/10/22, officers were advised of a catalytic converter that had just occurred at the Deerfield Townhomes. The reporting party stated he was outside when he observed a white Chrysler 300 driving around the complex. He then heard a dog barking and what appeared to be a saw cutting something. The caller said he walked toward the sound and observed the Chrysler parked next to a maintenance vehicle, but once he got closer, the Chrysler sped off. He described the suspect vehicle as having a cracked front bumper, a passenger side headlight out, and purple reverse lights. He did not see the driver but said the passenger was a white male with black hair wearing an N95 mask. He then explained that he looked under the maintenance vehicle and observed a saw blade stuck in the exhaust.

Miscellaneous

On 05/09/22 at 7:15 p.m., Officer Stracek was dispatched to meet a citizen in the Hermantown Police Department parking lot regarding items left at his house by ex-coworkers. Officer Stracek observed a vehicle in the lot that appeared to be a law



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enforcement vehicle. The SUV had long antennas coming from the roof, a light bar in the rear window, and high visibility tape along the rear bumper similar to what Duluth Police marked squads have. There were badges on the side and rear of the vehicle. As Officer Stracek was speaking with the 56-year-old male driver, he observed the interior of the vehicle to look like an equipped squad car; St Louis County radio traffic was emitting from a dash-mounted law enforcement grade radio. When asked about the vehicle, the man said he is a security guard for Per-Mar and uses the emergency lights to run “code” to fires and alarms. He further stated the badges were okay because they didn’t specifically say “police.” The man proudly told Officer Stracek that people come speeding from behind and slam on the brakes thinking he is a police officer. He assured Officer Stracek that did his research on the laws regarding police impersonation and said he is within his rights to have his vehicle outfitted. Officer Stracek later checked the man’s law enforcement contacts and discovered that in February 2022, a caller reported that she was concerned for a law enforcement officer’s safety after she saw the man’s vehicle unoccupied with emergency lights on. It was later determined that the man “ran code” to a burglary alarm; during the man’s response to the burglary, a St. Louis County Rescue Squad member had passed the vehicle and thought he was a law enforcement officer also. Officer Stracek discovered that during that incident, the man was wearing a security badge with an external vest carrier similar to his own, a non-lethal pellet handgun, Taser, ASP baton, and other law enforcement items. It was also noted that Per-Mar does not allow security officers to “run code” and doesn’t issue them the equipment that the man was wearing. Deputies told him at the time of the incident to remove the emergency lights but he never did. Later in the evening, Officer Stracek responded to the man’s residence for a public standby. While there, the man explained his connections to law enforcement and showed Officer Stracek the photo gallery on his phone, which was full of thin blue line photos, law enforcement logos, and other law enforcement photos. He stated that the scanner in his vehicle gets “all” the police channels and has a GPS chip in it. Officer Stracek explained to the man that it was illegal to have that radio in his vehicle. The man did not see any issue with his vehicle’s appearance. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney’s office for possible charges of impersonating a police officer and having a police scanner in a motor vehicle.