



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 05/15/22 to 05/21/22, the Hermantown PD had 181 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

Shortly before 1 a.m. on 05/16/22, Officer Stracek performed a traffic stop on a vehicle traveling 51 mph in a 40 mph zone. Upon approaching the vehicle, he detected a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage emitting from the vehicle. He noted many open containers in the vehicle, including a 24-pack of beer with approximately half the cans opened and crushed on the rear floorboard. The 28-year-old female driver slurred her speech while talking to Officer Stracek and had glossy eyes. When asked if she could roll down her rear window halfway so the dark tint could be checked, she said no and added that she didn't have to. The driver told Officer Stracek that she didn't have photo ID or anything else with her name on it. When asked to slowly spell her name, the woman began yelling at her passenger, who she said had been drinking all day. The woman then began digging in her pockets and had to be detained in handcuffs, as she would not stop reaching in her pockets and around the vehicle. She kept moving her wrists and grabbing her own hands in an attempt to make it difficult for officers to handcuff her. She also called officers profanities and was pulling away. The woman again denied drinking but agreed to perform field sobriety testing, which she performed poorly on. She initially declined to provide a preliminary breath sample, but once she was advised that she was under arrest for DWI, she changed her mind. Her preliminary breath sample registered a reading of .159% blood alcohol content. The female passenger provided a PBT that resulted in .000 and was allowed to leave in the vehicle. After the driver was placed into the back of Officer Stracek's squad, she laid down and began kicking and yelling. She was transported to a local hospital, where she refused a blood test and a urine test. The woman was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for charges of 2nd degree test refusal, 3rd degree DWI, speed, and window tint violation.

On 05/20/22 at approximately 9:40 p.m., Officer Stracek conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle whose registered owner had an expired driver's license. The 45-year-old man driving the vehicle was not the registered owner. This man had a revoked driver's license status. The man could not sit still, had exaggerated reflexes, dilated pupils, and quick, excited responses to Officer Stracek's questions. The man was sweating and visibly shaking. In plain view, Officer Stracek observed a metal straw and a new box of tinfoil. The man initially stated the last time he smoked methamphetamines was before Officer Stracek arrested him in January. After performing field sobriety testing, he admitted he had been around meth recently but denied using. Officer Stracek advised him that he would be bringing the man for a blood draw and the man then admitted to using "a while back" before clarifying that it was approximately 17 hours prior to the traffic stop. Several pieces of drug paraphernalia were located in the vehicle along with a switchblade. Charges are pending results of the blood test.

Just after 1 a.m. on 05/21/22, Duluth officers were advised of a hit and run. They located the suspect vehicle and requested that Officer Stracek, who was working a Toward Zero Death special traffic enforcement shift, respond to process the 23-year-old driver for DWI. The driver denied any involvement with a hit and run. He admitted to Officer Stracek that he consumed two beers at a downtown bar, and to drinking more beverages earlier in the night. The man performed field



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sobriety testing, including a preliminary breath test that resulted in a reading of .182% blood alcohol content. Reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of 3rd degree DWI and .08 or more.

Drugs

On 05/15/22, shortly before 4 a.m., Officer Stracek performed a traffic stop on a vehicle with a burnt-out license plate light. The male driver stated he didn't have a license and he was driving because his female passenger didn't feel good. He said he was previously pulled over and had received a written warning for driving without a license. He gave the warning from January 2022 to Officer Stracek, who noted the date of birth made the driver 17 years old. Officer Stracek was unable to find any history with the name the young man provided and he asked if the driver could show him any social media. The male stated he only had snapchat and his username was only his first name with numbers. He said he doesn't know his social security number. He provided his parents' names, but said he didn't know where they lived. He claimed to live with his girlfriend in Hill City and stated he doesn't own a cell phone. He was detained until he could be positively identified. It was later determined that the written warning provided by the young man had been issued with his father's last name, but that his legal last name is the same as his mother. The teenager was identified as a runaway out of Hibbing and was taken into custody. Officer Stracek had noted the odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle. He ultimately took possession of marijuana, mushrooms, a bong, other drug paraphernalia, and an open container of an alcoholic beverage. The teenager was lodged at the Arrowhead Juvenile Center and reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of 5th degree possession, false name, possession of a small amount of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, and no Minnesota driver's license.

At approximately 8:30 p.m. on 05/21/22, Officer Stracek observed a vehicle in the Sam's Club parking lot. A routine license plate query indicated that the registered owner of the vehicle had an active warrant for domestic assault. The male in the driver's seat matched the physical description of the registered owner. The man attempted to get out of the vehicle and walk into the now-closed store. The man initially denied being the registered owner, but was ultimately taken into custody for the warrant. A meth pipe was located in the vehicle, along with a small metal capsule containing meth. In addition, two cut-off catalytic converters with power tools were located. The 40-year-old man was lodged for his warrant. Charges for drug possession and pending test results.

On 05/18/22, just before 3 p.m., officers were advised of a medical call in the Walmart parking lot in which a female was on the ground and CPR was in progress. The reporting party advised officers that she observed the female get out of a vehicle and collapse to the ground. Another bystander, a nurse, came over to help and began CPR. Upon officers' arrival, the woman's face was blue and the man with her admitted that it was possibly an overdose, but stated he went into the store and left her in the car. Officers detected a faint pulse but the woman was not breathing. Over the course of several minutes, a total of four doses of Narcan were administered to the woman. The Hermantown Volunteer Fire Department arrived and began to provide air to the woman and a short time later, she came around and sat up on her own. It took her several minutes to become coherent and she admitted to using heroin. The 31-year-old woman was transported to a local hospital.



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The crimefighting continues...

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Theft

On 05/15/22, Officer Battaglia was advised that the owner of a Miller Trunk Highway business was reporting that an enclosed utility trailer was stolen from the parking lot overnight. The value of the black trailer was estimated to be \$10,000. There was nothing of value in the trailer at the time of its theft.

On 05/16/22, another business off Miller Trunk Highway reported a trailer taken overnight. The replacement value for the trailer was \$5,500. The reporting party provided a list of notable items that were stored inside the trailer, including patio heaters, a commercial refrigerator, a display case, five 20-pound propane tanks, a slicing machine, spare tire, and moving blankets, among other items. Surveillance footage from nearby businesses clearly show the suspect vehicle to be a silver Dodge Durango with Minnesota plates with a male driver. On 05/20/22, a St. Louis County Deputy performed a traffic stop on a Dodge Durango that was pulling the stolen trailer. The 46-year-old male driver was lodged for warrants and possessing the stolen trailer. Detective Williams later met with the suspect at the St. Louis County Jail. He stated he purchased the Durango about a week ago and has been trying to get back on his feet. He said he was staying at local shelters or sleeping in the vehicle. He said he was broke, homeless, and had no money. He said he stopped at a gas station to get anti-freeze for the Durango when he saw the trailer sitting in a nearby lot. He admitted to taking the trailer and said he was using it to sleep in the last few nights. He said he used the heaters he found inside to stay warm. He stated that he felt bad and regretted his decision, and was actually on the way back to return the trailer when he was arrested. The trailer and property inside were returned to the business owner, who stated that almost everything was there and he was only missing a mixer. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of motor vehicle theft and theft of property.

On 05/20/22 at 10:28 a.m., Officer Battaglia was advised of a vehicle prowl at a Miller Trunk Highway business. The reporting party stated that a work truck had been parked in the lot overnight and when he arrived to work, one of the door compartments was partially open. He stated that a number of power tools and batteries were taken. Video shows the suspect vehicle, a silver Dodge Durango, enter the parking lot. The suspect can be seen using a flashlight and removing items from the work truck before leaving the lot ten minutes after arriving. After the Dodge Durango was stopped later that day, Deputies confirmed that the stolen tools were in the back of the Durango.

On the evening of 05/16/22, Fleet Farm reported that a male had stolen a knife and a t-shirt with a total value of \$50. Officer Gottschald reviewed surveillance footage of the incident and observed the suspect select a utility knife set and attempt to open the box with his hands. He was unable to get it open, so he took his own utility knife from his pocket and used it to cut the packaging before putting both knives back into his pocket. As he walked through the store, the suspect put the shirt down the front of his pants, unbuckling his belt to do this. He then paid for some consumable items and left with another male and a female. Officer Gottschald noted that the suspect was wearing a shirt with a business name and phone number on it; she made contact with the business owner and provided a photo of the suspect, who the owner identified as an employee of the business. Officer Gottschald attempted to make contact with the



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20-year-old suspect by phone but was unsuccessful. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of felony possession of burglary tools and shoplifting.

On 05/19/22, shortly after 9 p.m., Walmart reported a female shoplifter that exited the store and left in a vehicle. Sgt. Pfeiffer located the vehicle and initiated a traffic stop. As the vehicle pulled over to the shoulder, a female passenger exited the vehicle and began walking. The female matched the description of the shoplifter and Sgt. Pfeiffer stopped his squad near her, exiting and telling her to stop. The woman crossed in front of the squad car and began to walk the other direction. Sgt. Pfeiffer took hold of the woman's arm; she ripped her arm away and continued to pull, twist and shove Sgt. Pfeiffer while yelling at him to tase her. The woman then ran around the squad, still attempting to get away. Sgt. Pfeiffer then directed her to the ground, where she continued to resist and fight by rolling her body, pulling away and pushing him. He was able to restraint her until another officer arrived to assist. The stolen items, valued at approximately \$185, were returned to Walmart. The 33-year-old woman was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for gross misdemeanor obstruction, theft, and fleeing on foot.

Traffic

On 05/20/22 at 1:47 a.m., Officer Stracek observed a Honda van that was registered out of Cannon Falls, Minnesota. After turning to follow the vehicle, he observed it traveling at a high rate of speed. Due to the distance between the vehicle and squad car, he was unable to get a radar reading, but he had to exceed 50 mph to gain ground on the vehicle in a posted 30 mph zone. When the vehicle was approximately 100 yards ahead, the driver slammed on the brakes and quickly turned. Officer Stracek located the vehicle behind a semi-trailer at a residential address. Due to the time of night, the vehicle being registered out of town, and the evasive driving, Officer Stracek pulled into the driveway and exited his squad to try to make contact with the driver, who he located in the woods, partially behind a small shed and appearing to be hiding. The man said he lived at the residence with his girlfriend. He said he was coming back from work and was urinating behind the shed. Officer Stracek advised the man he was observing signs of impairment and the man stated he has been through DWI court and is working on getting his license back. Officer Stracek noted that the 68-year-old man had a driving status of canceled-inimical to public safety with a no-alcohol restriction. The man declined to perform field sobriety testing but admitted he might be over the legal limit. The man ultimately gave a preliminary breath sample with a reading of .056% blood alcohol content. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of gross misdemeanor driving after cancelation-inimical to public safety and violating the no-alcohol license restriction.

Check Welfare

On 05/16/22 at 1:15 p.m., Officer Williams responded to a Birchwood Drive residence to check the welfare of a 78-year-old woman at the request of a family member, who stated that she was concerned about the woman's health and current living situation. She stated the woman's son also lives at the residence. Officer Williams made contact with the woman through a screen door. She would not let him inside, but said she was alone and doing fine. She wanted to know who called and when told, she was not happy, using profanity and stating that the family member has her own problems, before slamming the door in Officer Williams' face.