



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 06/05/22 to 06/11/22, the Hermantown PD had 169 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 06/10/22, Officer Gottschald was advised that a food delivery driver was believed to be intoxicated while driving. The restaurant manager told Officer Gottschald that the 32-year-old woman had taken one hour and eight minutes to delivery to an address less than four miles away. Officer Gottschald made contact with the woman, who said she was having some vehicle issues and her vehicle kept rolling forward. Chief Crace, who was working a Toward Zero Death special traffic enforcement shift, responded to the scene. Both Chief Crace and Officer Gottschald detected a strong odor of alcohol emitting from the vehicle and noted that the woman was exhibiting slurred speech, poor balance, and had glossy eyes. She denied drinking, was belligerent during the encounter and swore at officers several times. The woman refused to perform field sobriety testing and later, a breath test. During a search of her vehicle, officers located a Gatorade bottle with clear liquid believed to be vodka. The woman was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for 3rd degree test refusal and 4th degree DWI.

Theft

On the morning of 06/05/22, Officer Enright was dispatched to the Holiday Inn Express for the report of a vehicle prowler. A 25-year-old man and his 21-year-old girlfriend stated that their vehicle had been entered sometime after 11 p.m. and the man believed he had accidentally left the truck unlocked. He said did not see any damage to the vehicle but the suspect left behind a tray of cheap sushi on the center console. \$680 worth of items had been taken from the vehicle, including a Kindle, sunglasses, and a Hydro Flask water bottle.

On 06/08/22, a 48-year-old man reported that he had been at Walmart when an unknown female asked to use his cellphone to get on Facebook. He agreed to let her use his phone, but after he gave it to her, she ran away and got into a car with another female and kids inside. This incident is under investigation.

On the evening of 06/09/22, a 41-year-old Hermantown resident reported a burglary at his residence. He advised Officer Mischke that he got home and found the front door unlocked and the storm door propped open. He also stated his spare key was missing. The man said he went inside and saw opened drawers in nightstands and filing cabinets before discovering that over \$700,000 cash had been taken from the home but it did not appear that anything else was stolen. He explained to Officer Mischke that he is a professional gambler. The man said that approximately three weeks ago, he had a female friend help him clean the house and she found the cash; he said that a couple days ago, a male acquaintance commented on the money, stating that the female had told him about it. Sgt. Pfeiffer was able to lift a partial fingerprint from a drawer handle. This incident is under investigation.



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Traffic

On 06/06/22, Officer Stracek observed a vehicle traveling at 61 mph in a 40 mph zone. He made contact with the 37-year-old driver, who initially stated he had recently purchased the vehicle. He later corrected himself and said the vehicle belonged to an uncle and he was "renting" it for two weeks. Officer Stracek noted that he previously cited the man for driving after revocation. He discovered that the man has six pending no proof of insurance cases and multiple pending driving after revocation cases. The man was advised to park on the shoulder of the road and call for a valid driver. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney for charges of speeding, driving after revocation, and no proof of insurance.

On 06/07/22 at 8 a.m., Officer Stracek received information regarding a motorcycle that fled from Superior on 05/23/22. The suspect motorcycle matched the description of the motorcycle that fled from Officer Stracek on 05/20/22. At 8:10 a.m., Officer Stracek observed the motorcycle in the driveway of a Duluth address before heading back to the Hermantown Police Department. At 8:18 a.m., Officer Stracek was at the intersection of Maple Grove Road and Stebner when the motorcycle passed through the intersection, heading north on Stebner. The driver of the motorcycle made eye contact with Officer Stracek. Officer Stracek turned to follow the motorcycle and observed it was displaying a moped plate, not a motorcycle plate. When Officer Stracek initiated a traffic stop, the driver popped a small wheelie and accelerated at a high rate of speed, turning around to look at the fully marked squad car with lights and siren activated. The motorcycle eventually pulled into the Skyline parking lot, turned around and stopped facing the exit. The driver was slow moving and wasn't listening to Officer Stracek commands, was confrontational about getting off the bike and was asking what he did. Officers on scene were able to check the motorcycle's VIN, which came back to a 2012 Kawasaki out of New Mexico. The 45-year-old driver stated he purchased the motorcycle from a towing yard and rebuilt it, but he was having a hard time trying to register it, so he put the moped plate on it. He denied involvement in running from Officer Stracek or the Superior Police Department. He said he sometimes lets other people use the motorcycle and added that he had been involved with running from the police years ago and wouldn't do it again. Due to the motorcycle being involved in an active investigation, it was towed from the scene.

On 06/11/22 at 1:47 a.m., Officer Gottschald was southbound on Miller Trunk Highway with a green light at the intersection with Ugstad Road. A vehicle that was northbound on Miller Trunk turned left onto Ugstad Road in front of Officer Gottschald, failing to yield to the yellow flashing arrow. She performed a traffic stop and made contact with the 26-year-old driver. He stated he did not have his driver's license with him and thought it may be suspended. A check of the man's name returned a driving status of canceled-inimical to public safety. She advised the man to park the vehicle and explained that if he continues to drive, he could be arrested. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of driving canceled-inimical to public safety.



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The crimefighting continues...

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Drugs

On 06/05/22 at approximately 12 p.m., Fleet Farm reported that two males had been at the store for hours and had put hundreds of dollars of merchandise in their cart but their card was declined when they attempted to pay for it. In addition, they had their vehicle's oil changed but had no way to pay for it. A loss prevention employee stated they were acting odd as they walked through the store. Officers Enright and Salo responded to the store. Officer Enright spoke to the younger man, who stated this was just a misunderstanding and was attempting to dig in a bag for a credit card. When running a check of the 29-year-old's name in police records, Officer Enright discovered that he had three felony and two gross misdemeanor warrants for a total bail amount of \$27,000. When he was taken into custody, a pipe with white residue was located. When the man was lodged at the jail, staff advised that they located a one-hitter pipe; during a body scan, a canister was also located in the man's rectum and he admitted it contained methamphetamine. Officer Enright took possession of the canister and later confirmed that it tested positive for meth. The man was lodged for possession of methamphetamine, introducing contraband into a jail, and possession of drug paraphernalia, as well as for his active warrants. When he arrived on scene, Officer Salo approached the vehicle and saw a male passed out in the driver's seat with the door open. There was an open bottle of beer in the center console that appeared to have had a few sips taken and there were bubbles in the liquid. The 46-year-old male woke and up identified himself when Officer Salo announced his presence. The man had poor balance, slurred speech, and was confused. He admitted to smoking THC earlier in the day and provided a preliminary breath sample that resulted in reading of 0.00. As the keys for the vehicle were still with Fleet Farm employees, Officer Salo determined that the man did not have physical control of the vehicle. The man was cited for theft and open container and was advised to call for a ride, as he appeared to be under the influence and had a cancelled driver's status in Minnesota. A short time later, Loss Prevention advised that the man had paid for the oil change. The initial citation was voided and a new citation for only open container was reissued to the man at the scene. A few hours later, Loss Prevention again contacted Officer Salo, advising him that the man had not left with the family member he called and Fleet Farm wanted him trespassed.

On 06/06/22 at 1:35 p.m., Walmart reported that a female had been in the store for a couple hours and was currently at the self-check with a cart full of merchandise. The woman scanned nearly all of the food items in her cart, but missed several non-food items. The female then paid for her scanned merchandise and left with all the items. The 34-year-old woman was identified and spoke to Detective Dwyer, claimed this was a mistake. She explained that she had scanned a case of energy drinks twice but was unable to scan a case of pop and it equaled out. She said she attempted to find an employee, but was unable to and carried on. When informed that the 23 items not paid for totaled \$227.25, she had no legitimate explanation. She was ultimately cited for theft. Officer Stracek located the vehicle that the woman came in, which was registered to a 53-year-old man. He discovered there was an order for protection between the female shoplifter and the registered



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owner. As Officer Stracek pulled around the next row, the vehicle pulled out of its parking spot and quickly made its way to the parking lot exit. Officer Stracek performed a traffic stop and made contact with the driver, who initially indicated he was the vehicle's owner. When Officer Stracek advised him that he did not have a valid license, the man provided a false name. Officer Stracek noted that the photo associated with the name in police records looked nothing like the man in the vehicle. He was able to determine the man's real identity, noting that the man had provided his brother's name and he was not the registered owner of the vehicle he was driving. He then placed the man under arrest for an active Wisconsin warrant for possession of methamphetamines. While conducting an inventory search of the vehicle prior to it being towed, Detective Dwyer located a backpack containing multiple items belonging to the man, including .7 grams of methamphetamine. The 53-year-old man was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for 5th degree possession of meth, false name, and no proof of insurance.

Shortly before 1 p.m. on 06/11/22, Officer Stracek was dispatched to the area of Haines and Maple Grove Roads to check the welfare of a man that was walking in the roadway yelling at himself. Officer Stracek located the man, who was yelling at the ground and aggressively throwing his fists. When Officer Stracek made contact with the male and asked what was going on, the man responded that he was just "screaming and hollering." The man said he was in a bad mood because when he walked into a store, the room would be "different" after taking multiple steps inside. He said he was headed to Dunham Sports, which has been closed for quite some time. The man was displaying signs of drug use and he admitted to smoking meth earlier in the day. He admitted to having two grams of meth that cost around \$120 to buy. He then pulled out the baggie containing the methamphetamine and attempted to pour it out into the dirt. Dispatch advised Officer Stracek that the 35-year-old man had four minor warrants from St. Louis County and a history of violence against law enforcement. The man was taken into custody for the warrants and 5th degree possession of a controlled substance. After being medically cleared at a local hospital, he was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail.

Suspicious Activity

At 2:22 a.m. on 06/08/22, Officer Gottschald observed a vehicle behind Goodwill next to the dumpsters. She made contact with a female standing near the dumpster. While speaking with the female, a male started to jump out of one of the dumpsters. The female identified herself as the 52-year-old registered owner of the vehicle. The male stated he did not have his driver's license with him but provided his name and date of birth. Officer Gottschald checked the driver's license photo of the name he provided and it clearly did not match the male at the scene. When confronted, the man admitted he had a warrant out of Pennington County and didn't want to be arrested. He stated he used his close friend's name and date of birth. He was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for providing a false name and for his warrant. The woman was advised not to return to Goodwill after hours and was sent on her way.

Missing Person

Just before 9 a.m. on 06/11/22, staff at a group home reported that a 34-year-old resident ran away sometime after 1:30 a.m. Staff provided a description of the male and stated he is considered a vulnerable adult with required daily medication. Officer Stracek called the man's cell phone; the man immediately hung up once he found out he was speaking to an officer. The man was listed in the national system as a missing person.