



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

# AROUND TOWN

During the week of 08/07/22 to 08/13/22, the Hermantown PD had 184 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  
Tim Battaglia  
Jon Enright  
Erika Johnson - SRO  
Olivia Gottschald  
Jonathan Stracek  
Andrew Leibel  
Alex Prouse  
Brandon Solem

## K-9 Officers

Tuuko  
Jack

## Records

Jessica Sorensen  
Dana Ross  
Samantha Knapp

### Disturbance

On the afternoon of 08/08/22, a caller reported two younger kids throwing stuff at the cinder block building at the old football field. Officers located the 10- and 11-year-old boys walking across the foot bridge into the baseball fields. After a short while, the younger boy stated they were playing catch and one kid missed, causing the ball to hit the building. No damage was discovered, but Officer Leibel did notice fresh footprints on the door. Officer Leibel spoke to the boys about vandalism, damage to property, and being truthful when asked what's going on.

On 08/13/22 at 7:45 p.m., officers were dispatched to a residence in the 5000 block of Maple Grove Road after a woman reported that someone had pushed her husband. When officers arrived on scene, the 79-year-old man explained that he sold a vehicle to a woman the previous week and she had called a couple days ago saying there was an issue with the vehicle. The man purchased a thermostat housing for the woman to put in the vehicle and she had picked up it earlier in the day. Around 7 p.m., the woman returned with a number of other people, including two children, to tell him there was an issue with the head gasket. The man stated that the 41-year-old woman started yelling at him when he answered the door and the 37-year-old man with her was also agitated and kept taking his shirt off and coming up toward the older man while yelling at him. Neither the man nor the woman showed any intent of leaving the property and after the third time the younger man approached the older man, the older man went inside his residence and came back out with a handgun. He told officers he was nervous due to the younger man's behavior and he was afraid the younger man would attack him. He stated he wanted all of them to leave his property. The man said he had the firearm pointed at the ground but he did point the gun at the younger man once because he wanted him to stay away. He said he put his gun back in his pocket and told them all to leave his property. At this time, the younger man ran up to him and pushed him, knocking him to the ground on the concrete, causing him to strike his head and bite his lip. The other parties involved agreed that they went to the residence because of an issue with the vehicle. The woman stated that she told the older man she wanted her money back. They stated they believed the man was intoxicated or "weird" when they arrived. They downplayed their part in the disturbance but did admit to exchanging words with the resident. They also stated that the man had pointed the gun at all of them. The woman admitted that the older man was pushed but declined to say anything further about it. They showed officers a cell phone video of the incident that appeared to be taken after the older man was injured. Reports were forwarded to prosecuting attorneys. The city attorney advised that the younger man and woman should be cited for disorderly conduct. The county attorney is reviewing for possible 2<sup>nd</sup> degree assault charges against the resident for his use of a weapon.

### Drugs:

Just before 6 p.m. on 08/12/22, a caller reported that there was a female passed out in a black Subaru with broken windows in the parking lot of the Kwik Trip on Haines Road. The caller stated a male was taping plastic to the windows of the vehicle. While responding to the area, Officer Prouse observed the Subaru pass him traveling westbound on Maple Grove Road. He turned around and drove up behind the vehicle, observing it drift back and forth in the driving lane. He performed a traffic stop and the 46-year-old male driver stated he was not a valid driver. The 23-year-old passenger advised Officer Prouse that



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the windows were busted out while she was driving in Minneapolis and that she had reported the incident to the proper agencies. The man stated he was just attempting to tape the windows at the gas station and the passenger stated she was sleeping but was not passed out. A check of the man's name brought up a recent incident that occurred in Duluth. The man stated that incident was three weeks prior, he had been using methamphetamine laced with fentanyl, but that was also the last time he used drugs. Officers searched the vehicle after observing a hypodermic needle inside; K9 Tuuko also performed a sniff of the vehicle, giving officers probable cause to search based on his response. A glass bong in the shape of a skull and the hypodermic needle were located and the driver turned over a glass marijuana pipe he had on his person. A citation was issued to the man for possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a hypodermic needle, and driving after revocation.

### Driving Under the Influence

On 08/12/22 at 4:36 a.m., Officer Prouse and assisting officers were dispatched to the report of a vehicle in the ditch in the 5300 block of Hermantown Road. The reporting party advised that she believed the driver was very intoxicated. When Officer Prouse arrived on scene, he observed a Nissan Altima in the ditch with its turn signal activated. The male in the driver's seat was slumped over at the wheel and the vehicle was running. The driver then sat up and began speaking with Officer Prouse, stating he had zero drinks "today." He then stated he had been drinking beer at a Proctor bar that night. Officer Prouse had to assist the man exit his vehicle, as he stumbled forward and backwards numerous times. The man performed field sobriety testing poorly. His PBT result was .19; he later submitted to a breath test, which resulted in a higher reading. Reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of 3<sup>rd</sup> degree DWI and .08 or more.

At approximately 10 a.m. on 08/13/22, Officer Stracek was monitoring traffic on Ugstad Road when he observed a sedan traveling 41 mph in a 30 mph zone. Once the vehicle noticed him, the driver slammed on the brakes until he was traveling the posted speed limit. Officer Stracek followed the sedan and two other vehicles and once they passed the intersection with Maple Grove Road, he activated his emergency lights and passed the two other vehicles. The sedan hit the brakes but continued south on Ugstad at speeds of 51 mph in a 35 mph zone. The vehicle crossed over a small hill and Officer Stracek lost sight of it. Once over the hill, still couldn't see the vehicle and took a right onto Split Rail Drive, where he found the sedan attempting to turn around at the dead end. With emergency lights still on, Officer Stracek blocked the path of travel; as he exited his squad, the sedan started to drive around his vehicle but stopped when Officer Stracek commanded the driver to stop. The 30-year-old driver said he was trying to figure out how to get back to his friend's house and denied trying to get away from Officer Stracek. The man denied drinking, despite displaying signs of intoxication, and performed field sobriety testing at Officer Stracek's request. After his preliminary breath test showed a reading of .107% BAC, the man admitted to having three Arnold Palmers and cider, stating his last drink was a couple hours earlier. The man had one prior DWI in 2017. Reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of 3<sup>rd</sup> degree DWI, .08 or more, and speeding.

### Damage to Property:

On 08/09/22, Officer Gottschald took the report of a vehicle having its tires slashed. The 53-year-old reporting party stated that his son came home at 8 p.m. and advised him the tires on his truck were slashed. The man stated that earlier in the evening, he had seen a younger teenage male driving out of





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his driveway on a bicycle, but he didn't think anything of it until he found out his tires were slashed. The man stated that at the end of July, he made a report to HPD about the same male riding his dirt bike in the development. At that time, the 16-year-old driver and his mother were identified and spoken to. They were not home at the time of this report. When Officer Gottschald checked their residence again later in the evening, she located the reporting party's son, who stated he wanted to talk to the owners of the suspect's house. She advised the 19-year-old male that law enforcement would be conducting the investigation and he cannot go to the suspect's residence to speak with the family.

### Fleeing

At 12:30 a.m. on 08/10/22, Officer Stracek was on patrol when he observed a dark colored Chevy Silverado with a black toolbox in the bed. He recalled that on 08/09/22, this vehicle was reported stolen when St. Louis County Deputies were dispatched to a domestic disturbance; the owner of the Silverado stated her ex-boyfriend had taken the truck. The 41-year-old man was a suspect in multiple vehicle pursuits recently. Officer Stracek began to follow the truck, which quickly accelerated to speeds of 59 mph in a 40 mph zone. As he accelerated after the vehicle, the driver turned off all the lights. At that time, Officer Stracek activated his emergency lights and siren as he attempted to catch up to the vehicle, which appeared to turn off of Stebner Road onto Anderson Road. A short time later, a Duluth officer located the vehicle traveling down-bound on 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue West. The driver again took off at a high rate of speed and turned its lights off. The Duluth officer did not activate his lights or pursue the vehicle. At this time, Officer Stracek responded to a priority call. He later checked the area of the man's West Duluth address and his mother's house in Superior. He was unable to locate the vehicle at that time.

### Theft

On the morning of 08/08/22, a 45-year-old man reported that camping gear had been stolen out of the bed of his truck overnight at the Holiday Inn Express. He stated when he got out to the truck that morning, he noticed the tonneau cover to be partially opened and said it had been closed the night before. He provided a list of gear and replacement cost; the value of the items taken was reported to be \$1455.

On 08/11/22, a realtor reported that a real estate sign had taken from a property on Lindahl Road. She stated that this is the 4<sup>th</sup> time her sign has been removed from the ground in the past two months; she had recovered the sign the past three times it was taken, but has not located the sign this time. She estimated the value of the sign to be \$215. She said this listing is for vacant land and she suspects that nearby residents are probably taking the sign.

On the afternoon of 08/13/22, Officers Salo and Stracek were dispatched to the report of a shoplifting at Walmart. Los Prevention staff stated that a male had pushed out of a cart overflowing with stolen items before ditching the cart near the garden center and fleeing on foot. Officer Stracek located the suspect in the lower Subaru dealership lot. The 48-year-old man confessed to the theft, stating he had no money and was going to sell the items for cash. The man was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for felony theft, as well as a felony warrant for 1<sup>st</sup> degree burglary out of the Twin Cities area. The man had taken 15 high-value items from Walmart, including four crossbows and several scopes. The total value of the items was \$1912.64.