



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 09/04/22 to 09/10/22, the Hermantown PD had 192 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

Assault

At approximately 10:30 p.m. on 09/04/22, a 19-year-old female reported that she was assaulted by her 17-year-old brother. When Officers Stracek and Leibel arrived at the residence, the woman explained that there were two physical confrontations and the first one had occurred shortly after 9 p.m. She said that she and her brother were in the basement when an argument started. She said that he grabbed the collar of her hooded sweatshirt and swung her to the ground before rushing upstairs. The male returned downstairs a short time later; he again threw her to the ground. She stated that she was in the fetal position, using her hands to cover her head as her brother punched her more than five times in the back of her head. Officer Leibel spoke with the male, who said the argument was mutual but that he believed it was all part of his sister's "plan." He admitted that he shouldn't have put hands on her. Officers were able to view home surveillance footage of the incident before the young man was lodged at Arrowhead Juvenile Center. He was later issued a citation for misdemeanor domestic assault.

Driving Under the Influence

Just after 1 a.m. on 09/07/22, Officer Stracek was approaching the intersection of Miller Trunk Highway and Sugar Maple Drive, slowing for the changing stop light. He noted a black SUV slam on its brakes to avoid running the red light. He conducted a license plate query and discovered that the 41-year-old owner of the vehicle had a revoked driver's license and an active warrant for driving after revocation out of Hennepin County. Officer Stracek conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle and spoke with the driver, who was identified as the owner of the GMC Yukon. The man stated he was bringing his friend home and had already been pulled over by Duluth PD that evening and they gave him a warning. Officer Stracek noted a mild odor of alcoholic beverage emitting from the vehicle and observed that the man had glossy eyes and slurred speech. The man's passenger told Officer Stracek that DPD had already made the driver take a test. Officer Stracek reviewed DPD's traffic stop and they did not document that they had the driver perform field sobriety testing. He then returned to the driver and requested that he exit his vehicle. The man performed poorly on the tests. His preliminary breath test reading was .096%. The man was cited for the 4th degree DWI, .08 or more, and driving after revocation.

On 09/07/22 at 2:20 a.m., Officer Stracek observed a black Nissan that veered over the centerline, back over the fog line, took off at a high rate of speed, and failed to maintain its lane multiple times before nearly rear-ending a vehicle ahead of it. When Officer Stracek was able to safely perform a traffic stop, he did so and made contact with the 27-year-old driver. The man stated he was going to pick up his sister. When Officer Stracek explained the driving conduct he observed, the man said his tire was flat. Officer Stracek noted several signs of intoxication. After the man performed field sobriety testing, he submitted to a preliminary breath test that resulted in a reading of .178% blood alcohol content. The report was forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of 2nd degree DWI, .08 or more, and failing to drive in a single lane.

Traffic

On 09/07/22, a 59-year-old man reported that he had recently lost one of his checkbooks and believed it had been stolen. He said that this had been reported to the Duluth Police Department. He then advised that he noticed on his bank statement that one of his missing checks was used at the Hermantown Walmart in the amount of \$233.00. Loss Prevention assisted Officer Solem in locating the transaction and finding surveillance footage. Officer Solem was able to get the suspect's name, as he had provided ID when he used the check. He



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then positively identified the 35-year-old man by comparing a jail photo with the surveillance video. This incident is under investigation.

On 09/09/22, a 42-year-old Hermantown man reported that he recently noticed ten separate transactions for "Sam's Club AR" using his debit card number. He stated each transaction was for the amount of \$137.44, for a total loss of \$1374.40, and the transactions were all made on 09/05/22 and 09/06/22. The man stated he is not a Sam's Club member. Officer Solem confirmed the fraudulent transactions with the man's credit union before meeting with a Sam's Club manager, who stated that the description of "Sam's Club AR" would mean that the transactions were made online.

Theft

At 6:30 p.m. on 09/06/22, Fleet Farm reported a younger male was inside the store trying to use a lighter to get a BB gun open inside the store. Loss Prevention staff then advised that the male left without the BB gun, but had taken a magazine for a real handgun that he had concealed in his waistband. Officers located the suspect near the car wash in the parking lot. The male initially refused to put out his arms so officers could check for weapons, but he ultimately complied and Officer Stracek located the stolen magazine. The 13-year-old admitted to Sgt. Pernu that he stole the magazine for retail and said he didn't have any handguns. After officers were unable to make contact with a parent, the teen was issued a citation for theft and transported to his home address. It was noted that he was a witness in a recent shooting in Duluth. His 15-year-old friend, who was waiting in the grass nearby, was sent walking to the bus stop. Loss prevention explained to Officer Stracek that the older boy and his friends have been to Fleet Farm throughout this week creating disturbances. He said the juvenile group has been targeting BB pistols. He provided a photo from exterior store cameras from two nights prior in which the 15-year-old was brandishing a firearm in the grass near the parking lot. It is unknown if the handgun was real.

On 09/07/22, just after 2 p.m., Officers Solem and Salo responded to Fleet Farm for an active shoplifting. Loss prevention stated that two juveniles were attempting to cut security devices off packages with a knife. Officers watched live footage of one of the males using a lighter to try to burn the security device on a BB gun. The other suspect then handed him a knife, which was used to try to cut the security device. The pair then attempted to again light the security device on fire. During the footage, officers observed both males concealing a variety of items throughout the store that included batteries and candy. Loss prevention staff stated they believed the two suspects were associated with the two suspects from the previous day's theft. Officers identified the suspects as 12- and 13-year-old brothers. Both admitted to the theft and the older boy admitted to using a lighter to burn the security device on the BB gun. The total value of the stolen items was \$21.95. The boys' mother was contacted and responded to pick them up. She was advised that citations would be mailed for both juveniles. She stated that the children would be moving out of the state later that week.

On 09/09/22 at 3:45 p.m., officers responded to Fleet Farm for a shoplifting. A female was observed concealing a \$74.99 pair of men's shoes in her purse. In addition, loss prevention advised officers that the woman was a suspect in a similar theft on 08/24/22 in which she stole a pair of \$104.99 men's shoes. Officer Solem spoke to the 23-year-old woman, who admitted to both thefts, stating she had been selling the shoes online for money. The woman was issued citations for both thefts.

On 09/09/22 at approximately 5 p.m., officers responded to Fleet Farm for the report of a theft. The man had taken a \$45 pocket knife out of its packaging and concealed it before leaving the store. Officers Solem and Salo observed the suspect walking eastbound on Market Street. During a pat-down, the stolen black knife was located in the man's pocket. While transporting the man to jail for his active felony warrant out of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, the man claimed to have used heroin earlier in the day. He was cited for the theft.