



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

# AROUND TOWN

During the week of 09/11/22 to 09/17/22, 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  
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

Just before 8 p.m. on 09/17/22, a 34-year-old female reported that her boyfriend head-butted her and that she needed medical attention. Officers Gottschald and Prouse responded to the residence and located the 20-year-old male outside near a neighbor's house. He told Officer Prouse that he and his girlfriend were having a verbal argument and she would not let him go outside. He stated that the woman had head-butted him. After medical attention was provided, Officer Gottschald spoke to the woman, who stated that her phone was dying and she asked her boyfriend to use his phone. She said he got upset and threw his phone at her. She stated that while she was trying to calm him down, he took a butterfly knife from his pocket and threw it out the front of the house. She said that he was calling her names and when he head-butted her, the back of head bounced off the front door and she fell to the ground. She said that her boyfriend fell on top of her and she bit him. Officer Gottschald noted that the woman was bleeding from her forehead and had a large bump that continued to grow during the conversation. The man was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for domestic assault.

### Disturbance

On the evening of 09/17/22, a child called 911 to report that her dad was being mean to her mom. Officer Stracek arrived a short time later and located the parents, who were talking but not arguing at that time. They admitted to arguing and the man stated that the woman had a hard week and was upset. The woman told Officer Stracek that she only stays at the house on the weekends with her kids and during the week, they stay at her parents' house. It was decided that the solution for this evening was for the woman and children to leave. Officer Stracek went into the house with the woman and noted the poor living conditions. He observed hazards throughout the house, including pill bottles, rotting food, and holes in the floor. The children had dirty mattresses with no sheets and the woman told him that the kitchen sink doesn't work. Officer Stracek went outside and located the child that called 911 hiding and crying. He assured her that she did the right thing by calling 911 and spoke to her briefly about the struggles at the house. Paramedics responded to check the male after he began having chest pains. He cancelled the ambulance once the woman left and said he didn't want any help. This report was forwarded to social services.

### Driving Under the Influence

On 09/14/22 at approximately 11:15 p.m., Officer Enright was in the parking lot of the Hermantown Fire Hall at the corner of Morris Thomas Road and Stebner Road when a Honda CR-V pulled into the lot. The vehicle stopped in front of the squad car with its lights shining into the squad. No one got out of the Honda, so Officer Enright exited his squad and slowly approached the vehicle. The driver's door eventually opened and a man got out, followed by a woman in the passenger seat that exited and walked around to the driver. Officer Enright asked the male what was going on and he replied that he couldn't drive because he had "a decent amount, a couple beers." He clarified that he didn't feel good driving, so he pulled over. The 27-year-old man agreed to perform field sobriety testing but was unable to properly complete the tests. He provided a breath sample for the PBT that resulted in a .169% BAC reading. Reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of 2<sup>nd</sup> degree DWI and .08 or more.

On 09/17/22 at 12:42 a.m., Sgt. Pernu was dispatched to attempt to locate a silver Toyota Corolla with a possibly intoxicated driver. The reporting party said that he had come across the vehicle stopped partially in the driving lane of Midway Road during very foggy conditions. He said that he had stopped to check on the man and observed that his speech was slurred. He later told Sgt. Pernu that the vehicle passed him when he pulled over to call 911 and after he began following it again, he observed it swerving into the oncoming lane of traffic. As Sgt. Pernu responded westbound on Maple Grove Road toward Midway, the suspect vehicle passed him. He turned around and caught up to the vehicle as it approached the intersection of Maple Grove and Ugstad Roads. The vehicle made a left turn onto Ugstad and began to gain distance from Sgt. Pernu's squad car. A radar check on the vehicle showed it traveling at speeds of 43-45 mph in a 30 mph zone. Sgt. Pernu made a traffic stop on the vehicle and made contact with the driver, immediately detecting a strong odor of alcoholic beverage coming from the car. He also noted that the



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man's speech was noticeably slurred and his eyes were watery. The man admitted to having two beers that night, but said his last drink was a couple hours prior. He said several times that he was not over the legal limit. The man performed field sobriety testing at Sgt. Pernu's request, but stated he was not willing to take a preliminary breath test. The man was placed into custody for suspicion of DWI and transported to the Hermantown Police Department for further processing. A telephone and directories were made available for the man to consult an attorney, along with his personal cell phone. Sgt. Pernu repeatedly explained to the man how to use the phone to call outside of the building. During his attorney time, the man complained that his cell phone did not have service, that the directions for using the provided phone were not working, and that he did not know any attorneys in the area. Sgt. Pernu dialed a number that the man selected and handed the phone back to him. The man began to get upset that he could not reach anyone and stated that Sgt. Pernu was being unreasonable and was ruining his life. He then threw the directory on the counter and told Sgt. Pernu to call all the numbers in the county for him. The man refused a breath test and stated that Sgt. Pernu had no probable cause. He then added that he would be expecting Sgt. Pernu to pay for the tow charges for his vehicle. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of 3<sup>rd</sup> degree test refusal, 4<sup>th</sup> degree DWI, open bottle, and speed.

### Drugs

On 09/14/22 at 12:34 a.m., Officer Stracek observed a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed. He activated his radar and locked the vehicle's speed at 82 mph in a 50 mph zone. He caught up to the vehicle and conducted a traffic stop, making contact with the two 18-year-old males in the vehicle. The driver admitted his driving was "stupid" and stated he only had a learner's permit. Officer Stracek detected the odor of marijuana emitting from the vehicle and noted that the passenger was displaying signs of use. The driver admitted that the passenger was smoking earlier and claimed they didn't have anything illegal in the vehicle. A search of the vehicle turned up a small piece of wax paper with a blob of THC wax. The driver admitted that it belonged to both him and the passenger. Citations were later mailed to the pair for possession of marijuana in a motor vehicle; in addition, the driver was cited for speeding and no Minnesota driver's license.

Shortly before 7 a.m. on 09/16/22, an employee of the Econo Lodge reported that he located a baggie containing what appeared to be methamphetamine on the front steps of the motel. Officer Prouse responded and took possession of the baggie containing 1.9 grams of meth.

### Order Violation

On 09/13/22 at 7:25 p.m., Officer Stracek observed a vehicle that fled from him during a traffic stop on 08/09/22. The vehicle was parked in the Burning Tree Mall parking lot and he observed a female driver and male passenger. Officer Stracek was aware of an order for protection between the pair and he made contact with the male when he exited the truck. The man denied all involvement in the pursuit and stated there was no order between him and the female driver, claiming it was dropped in early 2022. While Officer Stracek was speaking to the 41-year-old man, the female exited the vehicle and walked to the strip mall. She did not listen when Officer Stracek called her over and instead walked inside the building. The man was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for the order violation and Officer Stracek noted that he has four pending cases for Domestic Abuse No Contact Order violations.

### Theft

On the evening of 09/14/22, a 38-year-old Hermantown resident reported that she and her teenage son were scammed out of \$200. She stated that they saw a Facebook post for puppies for sale. She told Officer Battaglia that the post was made by a person she believed to be an ex-husband of a distant relative and it listed an address in Fond Du Lac, WI, as the address where the puppies were for sale. The woman said she began to correspond with the party selling the puppies and her son ended up paying \$211.09 with fees via PayPal for a puppy. She stated that she later found that the real ex-husband of her relative had posted on Facebook that he had recently been hacked and that he is not selling puppies. The woman told Officer Battaglia that after discovering this information, she asked for a refund; she said the money was initially refunded to her son's account but shortly after, the other party withdrew the money again and blocked the reporting party on Facebook Messenger, where they had been communicating.