



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

# AROUND TOWN

During the week of 10/02/22 to 10/08/22, the Hermantown PD had 161 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

### Assaults

At 10:50 p.m. on 10/04/22, officers were advised of a domestic situation in which the reporting party stated that her husband was drunk, out of control, and that he had broken a mirror. Officer Prouse arrived at the residence and made contact with the 43-year-old man, who was bleeding from his hand. The man had residue from green spray paint on his forehead and a strong odor of alcoholic beverage emitting from his breath. The man told Officer Stracek that the woman was trying to start a fight and he didn't want anything to do with it so his wife took a can of spray paint and sprayed his couch and face. He said he then attempted to go to bed and she kicked him in the face. The man stated that there were two separate altercations that evening and made multiple comments about the woman being "crazy." He also stated that the woman has issues with meth and said she currently had some on her. He denied putting his hands on her. The Hermantown Volunteer Fire Department arrived on scene and wrapped the man's hand. The 34-year-old female told Officer Prouse that the pair was arguing and that he was "freaking out." She stated that at one point, the man had his hand on her throat and she kicked him to get him off of her. Officer Stracek noted that the woman was upfront about what happened that night and did not attempt to leave out any part that made her look bad, including spray painting the man and kicking him. Photos were taken of the woman's neck area, which had several small red dots that she said were from the man grabbing her throat. Officers noted that it did not appear that she was under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they spoke with her. It was determined that the man was the primary aggressor in the situation and he was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for misdemeanor domestic assault.

On 10/05/22 at approximately 8 p.m., Officers Solem and Battaglia were dispatched to a domestic assault. A 38-year-old woman reported that her son had been assaulted by his father. The woman said that she attempted to call her son that afternoon but had poor cell reception so she decided to drive to his father's residence to check on him. She found the 15-year-old playing outside in the yard and she offered to take him home with her for dinner since his dad wasn't there. The teen told her he was grounded and could not come with him so she left. She later texted the boy's father but was told he could not go to her house because he was grounded. At 7:30 p.m., she received a phone call from the man demanding that she pick up their son. She arrived at the residence to find that her son was outside with several neighbors, crying hysterically. She said he immediately jumped in her car and wanted to leave, stating that his dad hit him. The woman said the 40-year-old man and his girlfriend were outside arguing when she picked up her son. The teen told officers that when his dad got home a couple hours earlier, he was immediately angry and began yelling insults at him. He said that his dad pushed him against a wall numerous times and that during the altercation, he fell to the floor twice; once kicking his dad in an attempt to get away. He stated that he screamed for help multiple times during the incident. The teen said that his father pushed him into the couch and he admitted to pushing his dad away from him; it was at this point he said he was struck on the side of his face with an open hand. Officers noted visible bruising and redness on the boy's face. The boy said he was able to exit the house when neighbors came to the door after hearing screaming from the house. Officers were unable to make contact with the man at that time, but the following night, he was located and placed under arrest for domestic assault. The man told officers that he grounded his son due to bad behavior at school. He said he left the house for a short time and returned to find his son playing outside with an RC car and that they argued about it inside the house. He stated that the boys attempted to run out of the house, going back and forth between the front and rear doors, and he at times pushed the boy back so he couldn't leave. He said his son attempted to take a swing at him and he blocked it, admitting that he slapped the boy with an open hand. The man said that once the boy got outside and was screaming, he attempted to pick him up and carry him back inside. He



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denied pushing the teen to the ground, stating that he tripped over the dog and fell. The man was ultimately lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for misdemeanor domestic assault.

## Animal Complaints

On 10/03/22, a caller requested that officers check on a cat that was described as being "skin and bones." The caller thought the cat appeared to be neglected. Officer Gottschald responded to the residence of the cat and observed multiple cat toys in the home. The resident stated that the cat was his mother's and he is caring for it. He was not sure how old the cat is, but believes it to be in its 20s. He said the cat is nearing the end of its life and has some ongoing health issues.

On 10/03/22 at 7 p.m., a 67-year-old man reported that he had been on a walk on Hermantown Road when he got bit by a dog. He told Officer Stracek that he's aware that the dog is aggressive, so when he passes that house, he walks on the opposite side of the road. He said that the dog has bitten him in the past, but he had not reported it. The man said that when he passed the house today, the German Shepard that was laying in the yard charged him and entered the roadway. He stated the dog bit him on the arm, then the left buttocks, then on the right rear side of his hip. The man told Officer Stracek that the owner ran into the road and grabbed the dog, but the dog must have broken free from the man's grip because it charged him again. He said the dog got close with its hair up but didn't bite him again. The man expressed concern for a nearby daycare because the puppy was so aggressive. Officer Stracek responded to the dog's house and made contact with the 46-year-old owner and his wife. After Officer Stracek explained the city ordinances regarding dog at large and dangerous dogs, they agreed that the dog needed to go and planned on taking care of it in the morning. They provided vet records showing that the animal was up to date on his rabies vaccine.

## Drugs

On 10/04/22, School Resource Officer Johnson was advised of a student that was reported to be selling gummies to other students at the school via social media. Contraband was located and confiscated. This incident is under investigation.

## Missing Person

On 10/05/22 at 8:30 a.m., Detective Williams was dispatched to the report of a missing person from a Haines Road group home. An employee advised that a 32-year-old residence left that morning around 7:45 in a cab. According to staff, the woman left with extra clothes, cash, a TV, and a keyboard. Detective Williams discovered where the cab dropped the woman off in Duluth, but she was not located in the area. She was entered into the national crime system as a missing person.

## Kid Trouble

On 10/06/22, a middle school male in a behavioral crisis attempted to kick in windows inside the vestibule. Once outside, the student attempted to get back in, but the doors were locked and kicked at them. The school went into lockdown for preventative safety. The student then threw rocks at the windows in an attempt to break them before trying to find an open door in another part of the school. Despite attempts to stop him, the male made it to Ugstad Road and Officer Johnson used her squad to separate him from traffic using lights in wrong way traffic. The student refused to get into the squad and instead picked up sticks and rocks and threw them at Officer Johnson and the squad. Additional squads assisted in trying to get the male to stop walking away. The student's parent arrived and he was eventually able to be walked back to her vehicle.





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## Public Assist

On 10/02/22, a 31-year-old reported that he was supposed to have parenting time at 10 a.m., but his child's mother would not answer the door and had changed her phone number. He told Officer Battaglia that she had been driving erratically when she left the apartment complex she lives at. The 30-year-old woman spoke to Officer Gottschald, stating that she has full custody and her child's dad did not provide a clean urine sample, so she denied him parenting time. She stated that the man and his mother arrived at her home this morning to pick up the child and had blocked her in the driveway to prevent her from going to work. She said she was able to get out of the driveway and leave with her child, but the man and his mother followed her and she was frantic to get away from them. Both parties were advised that because there were no immediate concerns for the child's safety, law enforcement would not get involved in the custody dispute. The parents were advised to document the incident and resolve visitation issues in court.

## Theft

On the afternoon of 10/05/22, Detective Williams was advised that an 80-year-old Edgewood Vista resident had fallen victim to a scam in which he lost \$1000. The man said he received a call from a male with a foreign accent. The man told him his computer was being hacked and through the conversation, the man gained access to his computer and was remotely controlling it. The man said that he thought the caller was helping him. He followed the caller's instructions and proceeded to Target, where he purchased two \$500 gift cards and gave the card numbers to the caller. He then went to Cub Foods to purchase additional cards, but was stopped by a man who told him he was being scammed. Detective Williams advised the man to contact his bank to file a fraud report for the purchase of the gift cards and to have his accounts secured. He also suggested that the man take his computer to a PC store and have them inspect or wipe it, and to go through his personal accounts and change all his passwords.

On 10/08/22 at 10:40 a.m., Officer Stracek was advised by an Arrowhead Transit driver that his personal cell phone had been stolen from the bus. The man said he parked in the lot of the Kwik Trip on Haines Road and went inside. When he returned to the vehicle, he noted his Samsung S21 Plus was missing. The suspect was not located at that time and Officer Stracek responded to Kwik Trip to view surveillance video and speak to staff. The video showed the male suspect looking into the bus before opening the door and taking the phone. Officer Stracek was able to identify the 37-year-old suspect and shortly after 12 p.m., the man was located walking near Best Buy. The stolen phone was not in his possession at that time and he had changed clothes. The man denied being involved in the theft and told Officer Stracek that it could have been his brother that looks like him, describing his brother as being his aunt's son. On 10/09/22 at 3 a.m., the suspect returned the cell phone to Kwik trip staff. The overnight staff didn't know about the situation and collected the phone without calling the police, but Officer Stracek was advised when the manager came in at 6 a.m. The phone was returned to the owner. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of gross misdemeanor theft and tampering with a motor vehicle. Officer Stracek noted that the suspect has ten pending cases which include 1<sup>st</sup> degree burglary, felony damage to property, and other charges. The suspect also has an extensive history in the court system with convictions of theft.