



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 11/27/22 to 12/03/22, the Hermantown PD had 181 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

Order Violation

On 11/28/22 at approximately 11:30 a.m., Officer Gottschald observed a vehicle with a cracked windshield and noted that the registered owner had a revoked driving status. She conducted a traffic stop and made contact with the 22-year-old female driver, who stated she didn't know she was revoked. When running a query on the woman, Officer Gottschald noted that the woman was a protected party in an Order for Protection and a Domestic Abuse No Contact Order. Officer Gottschald then returned to the vehicle to identify the male passenger and determined that he was the respondent in the orders. After dispatch confirmed that the orders were active, Officer Gottschald took the 23-year-old man into custody and lodged him at the St. Louis County Jail. Later that afternoon, the female contacted Sgt. Pernu and said she was confused as to why the man had been charged with violating an Order for Protection, as she had not filed for one against him. She stated she was aware of the Domestic Abuse No Contact Order, but she said she had filed to have it dropped. After reviewing court records and speaking with the St. Louis County Civil Division, it was there determined that there was no Order for Protection in place between the pair. The man's citation was corrected to reflect only the DANCO violation.

Driving Under the Influence

Just before 12:30 a.m. on 11/27/22, Officer Stracek observed a vehicle traveling southbound on Stebner Road that was displaying tabs that expired in June 2022. He performed a traffic stop on the vehicle and made contact with the driver, who stated she was borrowing the car from a friend and that she was headed to get gas before bringing her passenger to the hospital. When asked if she had been drinking, the woman claimed to have had nothing at all and said her 32-year-old passenger had been drinking. A short time later, the woman admitted she drank a couple hours prior. The woman provided a breath sample that resulted in a reading of .131% blood alcohol content. Her male passenger was transported to a local hospital by ambulance after he provided a preliminary breath test sample with a result of .365%. The woman was cited for 4th degree DUI, .08 or more, and expired tabs.

On 11/27/22 at approximately 8:45 p.m., officers were dispatched to an accident at the intersection of Miller Trunk Highway and Arrowhead Road. The reporting party stated that one of the involved vehicles, a small black SUV, left the scene driving east on Arrowhead Road. Officer Prouse made contact with the female driver of a Honda Pilot that had been involved in the accident. The 41-year-old woman said she was making a left turn from southbound Miller Trunk onto eastbound Arrowhead when she was struck by a northbound vehicle. She later said she couldn't remember if her light was green or flashing yellow. Officer Stracek went through field sobriety testing with the woman after she admitted to drinking at a friend's house. She said she didn't have a lot and felt like she was okay to be driving. She performed the tests poorly and provided a breath sample that resulted in a reading of .310% blood alcohol content. She was later lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for 2nd degree DWI and .08 or more and Officer Stracek noted that she had a previous DWI in



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April 2020. At the accident scene, a 24-year-old male told officers that he had been waiting to cross the intersection at the stop light when he observed the accident; he said the collision caused the woman's vehicle to slide and hit his vehicle. Also at the accident scene, First Responders located a license plate belonging to the SUV that fled. A short time after the accident, a Menards employee reported that a vehicle had driven down the driveway to the lumber yard and a male wearing dark clothing fled into the woods. Officer Prouse responded to the suspicious vehicle and noted that the remaining license plate matched the one found at the accident. He observed that the vehicle, a Honda CRV, had sustained heavy front end damage to the entire front and tires and the airbags in the vehicle had been deployed. Officers were unable to locate the male driver of the CRV and were unable to make contact with the registered owners at that time. The case was forwarded to investigations to identify and contact the driver of the vehicle that fled the scene.

Damage to Property

On the morning of 11/27/22, Officer Gottschald was advised of the report of vehicle damage. She met with a 26-year-old female and her 58-year-old father who co-own the car. Officer Gottschald noted a dent on the passenger side of the vehicle and a gouge on the wheel well trim. The woman stated she believes the damage occurred between 11/25/22 and 11/27/22. She said that she wasn't sure that the damage occurred at the townhome complex she lives at, but she couldn't remember anywhere else she went where it might have happened. The woman's father later provided an estimate of \$1,945.46 to repair the damage.

Miscellaneous

Just after 10 p.m. on 12/01/22, Officer Stracek observed a Tahoe without license plates at the intersection of Morris Thomas and Stebner Roads. The vehicle then accelerated a high rate of speed. He noted that the vehicle kept braking when the squad car's headlights became visible around every turn and it appeared that the Tahoe was accelerating when the squad was out of sight in an attempt to gain ground. Officer Stracek was able to lock the vehicle's speed at 62 mph in a 40 mph zone. He performed a traffic stop and made contact with the 24-year-old driver, who denied trying to get away from him but admitted that he didn't have a valid license. He said he had purchased the vehicle and never had insurance on it, nor did he have an ignition interlock installed. The vehicle was towed from the scene and reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of gross misdemeanor driving after cancellation – inimical to public safety, interlock violation, no insurance, and speeding.

Theft

On 11/27/22, just after 3 p.m., officers were advised of a shoplifter at Walmart that fled on foot toward the Volkswagen dealership. Officer Gottschald was checking the Volkswagen lot when an employee told her that a man was hiding in a vehicle. She located the man, who said he was sleeping. After the man exited the vehicle, he fled down a hill and into the Subaru parking lot, where he was caught and taken into custody. The man denied shoplifting and refused to identify himself, stating that he wanted a lawyer. He was transported to the St. Louis County Jail and fingerprinted in an effort to identify him. Officer Gottschald located two backpacks in the vehicle that the man had been hiding in. One of the backpacks had been stolen from Walmart and contained other stolen merchandise with a total value of \$205.04. In the other backpack, Officer



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Gottschald located hypodermic needles, a clear glass pipe, and a prescription bottle containing Schedule IV Controlled Substance pills. After the jail was able to identify the 44-year-old man with his fingerprints, it was determined that he was not the person that the pills were prescribed to. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney for charges of felony possession of a controlled substance, shoplifting, fleeing on foot, obstruction without force, possession of hypodermic needles, possession of drug paraphernalia, and tampering with a motor vehicle.

On 11/27/22, just after 6 p.m., Walmart Loss Prevention reported that a known shoplifter was in the store with a cart full of items that he believed she was going to try to steal. Officers Stracek and Prouse met with Loss Prevention and watched a live-stream video of the woman pushing her cart into the seasonal area that used to be a third exit on the front of the building. The woman attempted to pry the doors open, but was unsuccessful. The woman walked near the general merchandise doors before returning to the seasonal area, where she organized her items into a basket and bin. She then headed toward the doors again, where she noticed that Officer Stracek ran up behind her as she walked out. She admitted that she went to Walmart with the intent to steal gifts for her family members, noting that she didn't have any money. The value of the items taken was \$1360.82. The items consisted of clothing, automotive accessories and other items. She was trespassed and reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of felony theft.

At approximately 7 p.m. on 11/27/22, Walmart reported two shoplifters that were attempting to run out of the store. Officer Stracek arrived at the store a short time later and made contact with a male and female as they were attempting to get into an Uber. The pair admitted to pushing out a cart with unpaid items, stating they are moving into a new apartment and don't have money to furnish it. They had attempted to take cat litter, curtains, and other items for the apartment. The value of the items was \$167.69. Loss Prevention later explained that the two had been in the store during a previous shoplifting and had put a loaded cart near the door. An employee had pushed the cart back into the return area so the pair had gone around the store and loaded a different cart. When he confronted them, the male grabbed a garbage can that he had paid for and they discarded the cart of unpaid merchandise. The 18-year-old female and 16-year-old male were trespassed from Walmart and cited for theft.

On the evening of 11/29/22, Fleet Farm reported a shoplifter that got into a vehicle that was still on the property as the gas mart. Officer Stracek arrived on scene and pulled behind the suspect vehicle. A 35-year-old man exited the vehicle and admitted to shoplifting. He said they went to Fleet Farm to find snowpants for their child. He didn't find any, but he saw the jackets and took off the tags before walking out with them.

On 11/30/22, Officer Salo was advised of a theft of generators. A Sunbelt Rental employee stated that a movie company had rented the generators to film in a gravel pit and they left the generators there on 11/09/22, as they were supposed to. The reporting party said that due to staffing issues, no one responded to pick the generators up for almost two weeks and his employee found that the generators were no longer there. The total value of the two generators is \$6145.