



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

# AROUND TOWN

During the week of 12/11/22 to 12/17/22, the Hermantown PD had 178 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 12/13/22, just before 7:30 p.m., Fleet Farm reported that a male had taken a BB gun into the fitting rooms and they believed he was going to conceal it. Loss Prevention advised that the suspect had also stolen a BB gun last week in a similar, unreported incident. Officer Gottschald arrived on scene and made contact with the 22-year-old man as he was exiting the store. He initially denied having a BB gun concealed on his person, but as they walked to the Loss Prevention office, he opened his jacket and said the BB gun was inside. As Officer Gottschald searched the man's jacket to ensure there were no more weapons, she located a knife and a small bindle with a crystal-like substance inside. The man first said that the jacket was not his and he stole it, but then stated it was his jacket and he knew the bindle contained methamphetamine. The value of the BB gun is \$119. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of felony possession of a controlled substance and shoplifting.

### Drugs

At 11:59 p.m. on 12/16/22, Sgt. Pernu was working a Toward Zero Death special traffic enforcement shift when he observed a vehicle without headlights or taillights on. He performed a traffic stop on the vehicle and made contact with the 19-year-old driver, who said he didn't know why he was being pulled over. Sgt. Pernu observed a strong odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle, but the driver denied having anything illegal in the car. He later admitted that marijuana was smoked in the vehicle earlier but he didn't think there was anything left. Sgt. Pernu had the man and his 18-year-old passenger step out of the vehicle while he conducted a search. He located a small soft-side cooler that contained a mason jar with several baggies with marijuana in them. There was also loose marijuana inside the cooler, along with rolling papers, a small tray, gum, a pocket knife, and eye drops. The passenger ultimately admitted that the bag was his and he was cited for possession of over 1.4 grams of marijuana in a motor vehicle. The driver was warned for driving without lights. The marijuana was processed at the Hermantown Police Department and was determined to have a total unpackaged weight of 17.5 grams.

### Driving Under the Influence

On 12/13/22 at 12:51 a.m., Officer Gottschald observed a vehicle traveling 57 mph in a 40 mph zone on Stebner Road. After she activated her emergency lights to initiate a traffic stop, the vehicle continued southbound before turning onto Tamarack Lane. The vehicle then pulled into a driveway, hitting a garbage can and recycling bin. The driver initially handed Officer Gottschald his debit card before finding his driver's license. She noted that the man was slurring and stumbling on his words and that his eyes were red and glossed over. He stated that after ending his shift at a bar, he had 2-3 beers. The 25-year-old man agreed to perform field sobriety testing and attempted to put on his jacket, as he was only wearing a long-sleeved shirt. Officer Gottschald had to assist the man in putting the jacket on, as he was attempting to put his arms into the wrong sleeves. After performing the testing, the man submitted to a preliminary breath test that resulted in a reading of .25% blood alcohol content. While the man was being handcuffed, he advised officers that he had a permit to carry and had a firearm in a waistband holster. Officer Prouse removed the gun, which was loaded with eleven rounds of 9mm ammunition, and an extra magazine that contained twelve rounds. While being processed at the Hermantown Police Department, the man stated he would not take the breath test. He was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail.



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for 3<sup>rd</sup> degree test refusal, 4<sup>th</sup> degree DWI, carrying a firearm under the influence of alcohol, and speeding.

## Miscellaneous

On 12/12/22 at approximately 10:30 p.m., Sgt. Pernu was conducting patrol in the Walmart parking lot when he observed a truck with a male in the driver's seat. He noted that the registered owner's 28-year-old son had multiple warrants for assault and burglary and appeared to match the description of the male in the driver's seat. As Sgt. Pernu waited for assisting officers to arrive, the man walked into Walmart. When he came back out, Officer Prouse positively identified the man and placed him into custody. Officer Gottschald observed a black and silver handgun on the driver's side floorboard of the truck. It was determined that the handgun was a .177 caliber BB gun that had been altered with an extended magazine. As the man was a convicted felon, prohibiting him from possessing firearms or ammunition, the handgun was taken to the police department where it could be inspected more safely. The man's 24-year-old passenger and her baby waited for a valid driver and the man was lodged at the St. Louis County Jail for his warrants.

## Theft

On the afternoon of 12/12/22, officers were dispatched to Fleet Farm for the report of two juvenile shoplifters that had concealed BB guns. They used a knife they had selected from the store to open the packaging of the BB guns. As the pair exited the store, Sgt. Pernu advised them to stop. The 17-year-old stopped, but the 15-year-old kept walking into the parking lot before taking off running. Sgt. Pernu ran after the teen, identifying himself as police and ordering him to stop. The boy slipped in the slush near a truck before getting up and attempting to run again, but was ultimately detained by Sgt. Pernu. The BB gun that the younger boy stole was located under the truck where he fell. While reviewing surveillance footage, Sgt. Pernu observed each males select a BB gun. While walking through the aisles, the older boy can be seen actively ripping at the packaging before beginning to gnaw on it with his teeth. They then walked across the store, where the older male selected a single kitchen knife, which he used to open the packaging for both BB guns. The value of each BB gun is \$31.99. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney for charges of shoplifting for both males, along with possession of burglary tools for the older boy and aid & abet possession of burglary tools for the younger one.

Shortly before 5 p.m. on 12/16/22, Officer Solem was dispatched to Walmart for a theft. A 39-year-old man reported that he purchased 26 items with a total value of \$108.78 and he proceeded to wait by the general merchandise doors for a taxi. When he learned the taxi was going to be late, he left his cart by the doors unattended and went to purchase additional items. He stated that after checking out for a second time, he returned to the exit and discovered that his cart was missing. The following day, Officer Solem met with Loss Prevention and viewed security footage of the incident. Approximately seven minutes after the man left his cart, an unknown male sat on the bench in front of the cart. After about five minutes, the suspect pushed the cart out of the store and proceeded to remove the items and walk to the bus stop.

On 12/17/22, a woman reported that Christmas gifts had been stolen from her vehicle in the Walmart parking lot. Officer Salo reviewed surveillance video and observed a male suspect steal items from the woman's truck. The suspect is the same male that stole items from a cart the previous day.