



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

AROUND TOWN

During the week of 12/25/22 to 12/31/22, the Hermantown PD had 141 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

Driving Under the Influence

On 12/26/22 at 2:39 a.m., Officer Stracek observed a sedan leave an apartment building in the 4100 block of Ugstad Road. The vehicle accelerated and appeared to be traveling over the posted 30 mph speed limit; Officer Stracek locked the vehicle's speed at 40 mph. He caught up to the vehicle as it continued northbound past Arrowhead Road, traveling 50 mph in a 45 mph zone. He performed a traffic stop on the vehicle and made contact with the 26-year-old driver. When Officer Stracek asked the man where he was headed, his front passenger answered for him and explained they were headed to drop off the man's mother in Pike Lake and pointed at the rear female passenger. The front seat passenger then explained they dropped off another person at the apartment on Ugstad Road. The passenger further explained that they were at a friend's house in Cloquet. Officer Stracek noted that the male driver was attempting to avoid eye contact and that the passenger was answering the questions instead of the driver. He also detected a strong odor of alcoholic beverage emitting from the vehicle. The occupants of the vehicle admitted they had been drinking, but the driver said he had been drinking earlier in the day, that he was "fine" now, and that he would blow all zeros. After performing field sobriety testing, the man submitted to a preliminary breath test and his result was .133% blood alcohol content. The man was cited for 4th degree DWI, .08 or more, and speed.

Traffic

At 7 p.m. on 12/25/22, Officer Leibel observed a vehicle on Haines Road without taillights on. He performed a traffic stop and the driver was surprised that they were "out again." The 45-year-old man admitted he did not have a driver's license and provided a state ID as identification. The man provided electronic proof of insurance that expired in November 2022, but he explained that the policy was current. A check of the man's record revealed that he had six prior convictions for no proof of insurance or uninsured vehicle. He currently has 68 pending traffic offense charges dating back to August 2020 that have gone unpaid or are in various stages of court proceedings. When Officer Leibel approached the vehicle again, he noticed that the left rear tire had nearly no tread left. The man stated that the tire was a spare he was forced to use. The man also told Officer Leibel he had "the right to travel" even though his driving status was deemed revoked. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney for charges of no insurance, driving after revocation, unsafe equipment, unsafe tires, taillights required, and not having a license plate light.

Theft

On 12/27/22, Arrowhead Auto Body reported a theft that occurred on the afternoon of 12/25/22. The reporting party showed surveillance video to Officer Gottschald; she observed a Silverado enter the lot and a driver and passenger got out multiple times to rummage through the dumpsters. The driver of the truck took items out of the dumpster and placed them into the bed of the truck. The passenger can be seen unplugging an extension cord from a dump loader and taking it with him. The



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employee stated that the driver hadn't taken anything of value from the dumpster but that they would like to pursue charges for the theft of the extension cord. Officer Gottschald made contact with the 44-year-old owner of the Silverado, who admitted he had been at the business and took items from the dumpster. He said he did not know who the passenger was, claiming he had picked up an unknown male that was walking near the St Louis County Jail. The man told Officer Gottschald this was a "weak theft case" and she should investigate real criminals such as Bill Gates. He told her he has never cooperated with law enforcement in his life and would only cooperate if he was a victim of a crime. He further stated he doesn't believe in personal property crimes. He refused to tell Officer Gottschald where he dropped the passenger at and admitted that he "in a round-about way" knows who the passenger is. The man was advised he could be charged with aiding and abetting in the theft and he replied that he had not committed any crimes. He was trespassed from Arrowhead Auto Body property and a citation for aiding and abetting theft was mailed to him.

Just before noon on 12/28/22, Walmart reported that a female was loading up a tote and Loss Prevention believed she was going to walk out with it. The reporting party told Officer Enright that the woman was loading items into bins and putting them in a cart. He stated that she did the same thing on 12/18/22, but on that date she had ditched the cart just prior to walking out. Loss Prevention confronted the woman when she pushed the heaping cart out the doors and she was initially uncooperative. When Officer Enright approached, she agreed to go back inside. She admitted that she had no intention of paying for the items in her cart and said she is broke. The value of the items in the cart was \$549.03. The 24-year-old woman had been trespassed from Walmart properties after being caught shoplifting in Mountain Iron over the summer. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of gross misdemeanor theft and trespassing.

On 12/29/22 at approximately 8 p.m., Officer Solem was advised of a burglary at a local storage unit. The 46-year-old victim stated that when he went to pay his storage bill and check his unit, he found the lock and locking mechanism had been cut. He told Officer Solem that the last time he was at his unit was in October and he didn't know when the burglary had occurred. The items he noticed were missing including a snowblower, tool chest, saws, and a turn table. He stated he would go through his unit so he could provide a complete list of items taken and their values.

On 12/30/22 at 3:43 p.m., Officer Salo responded to a shoplifting incident at Pure Pleasure. The employee stated that a male had come in with two females, the females paid for their merchandise but the male did not go to the counter. When confronted after the alarms went off, the man took the stolen item out of his pocket. The 20-year-old man confessed to the theft and told Officer Salo he was embarrassed to purchase the item in front of his girlfriend and cousin. The value of the item was \$18.99. The man was cited for theft and trespassed from Pure Pleasure.