



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

# AROUND TOWN

During the week of 03/26/23 to 04/01/23, the Hermantown PD had 202 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

On 03/29/23, shortly after 11 a.m., a 19-year-old female reported an assault that occurred in the Walmart parking lot on 03/25/23. Officer Solem spoke to the woman, who stated that she and her now ex-fiancé were homeless and living in a pickup truck. She described their relationship as being toxic and said he was controlling. The woman told Officer Solem that the 25<sup>th</sup> had been normal and they had both worked until 8:30 p.m. They then drove to Walmart and parked before putting their window covers up. She stated that the 20-year-old man told her that she stunk, so she was upset with him and became quiet, which angered him. The woman explained that the man yelled at her and grabbed her neck, causing her to pass out. She said she woke up to him smacking her in the face and she thought he was trying to wake her up. She stated that the man took her cell phone after she regained consciousness and that she didn't leave because she didn't know what to do. Over the next couple days, she spoke to her parents and his parents about the incident and decided that she wanted out of the relationship. The woman texted the man that she wanted her belongings back and went to her parents' house. Officer Solem made contact with the man by phone. The man agreed to come to the police department that afternoon, but never showed up. When Officer Solem called him to ask why, the man said he wanted to talk to a lawyer first. Reports have been forwarded to the prosecuting attorney for possible charges of felony domestic assault.

### Driving Under the Influence

Just before 10 p.m. on 03/30/23, Officer Leibel was traveling southbound on Miller Trunk Highway near Highway 194 when he observed a vehicle that had driven over the snowbank and into the ditch on the southeast corner of the intersection. The daytime running lights were illuminated but the headlights and taillights were not. Officer Leibel approached the vehicle to see if the driver needed assistance; he observed an older male in the driver's seat wearing a short sleeved shirt and shorts with his stomach showing. The man had some difficulty opening the door and when Officer Leibel greeted him, the man replied, "Hi, I'm stuck." Officer Leibel noted indicators of intoxication. A check of the man's name revealed that his driving status was cancelled inimical to public safety. The man admitted that he had been drinking, stating that his last drink was in Grand Rapids. As the man had a walking cast due to a recent surgery, Officer Leibel and three assisting officers attempted to help the man out of the vehicle. After getting the man out, it appeared that he had no intention of carrying any weight on either of his feet, as he could barely keep himself up by leaning against his truck. Officers got the man back into the truck and Hermantown Fire Department responded to assist. They used a "Manta" to load the man and carry him to the pavement, where he stood with assistance. Officer Leibel could smell a very strong odor of alcohol coming from the man's breath. Because of the man's inability to walk or care for himself, his cold weather exposure, and a complaint of shortness of breath, he was transported to a local hospital for a medical evaluation. Officer Leibel drafted a search warrant and after it was signed by a judge, blood was taken from the 74-year-old man. Charges of DWI and open bottle are pending results of the blood draw.



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### Damage to Property

On the afternoon of 03/26/23, a 44-year-old female reported that her vehicle had been left in the parking lot of a Miller Trunk business since 03/19/23. She stated that she found that her rear passenger side window was broken and her vehicle had been gone through. She stated she did not initially notice anything missing. An employee of the business stated that another customer had noticed a vehicle driving slowly in the lot a couple days prior. This incident is under investigation.

### Drugs

At 1:20 a.m. on 03/28/23, Officer Stracek observed a vehicle without a front license plate. After turning around to get behind the vehicle, he noted that there was a trailer hitch obstructing the full rear license plate. He conducted a stop and made contact with the 39-year-old man, who was ultimately arrested for driving after cancellation inimical to public safety. While the man was being searched, he admitted to having marijuana in his underwear. The marijuana was later weighed at 4.2 grams. Officer Stracek contacted the man's mother, who sent a friend to take possession of the vehicle. Prior to releasing it, Officer Stracek searched the vehicle, locating a jar with burnt marijuana and a glass pipe. Reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of possession of marijuana in a motor vehicle and driving after cancellation inimical to public safety.

### Public Assist

On the morning of 03/30/23, Officer Salo responded to assist after St. Louis County social workers reported that a 43-year-old woman was unable to safely care for her child due to recent meth use. The reporting party stated that they had been at the house the previous day and the woman's behavior was completely different. The woman confessed to using meth after the social workers left the previous day. While speaking with Officer Salo, the woman was fidgety, fast-talking, and appeared anxious. Officer Salo signed a custody hold and the reporting party and his team removed the child from the residence.

### Traffic

On 03/27/23 at 11:48 p.m., Officer Stracek was on patrol on Stebner Road north of the Getchell Road split. An oncoming vehicle failed to dim its high beams and Officer Stracek turned around and performed a traffic stop. The 41-year-old driver apologized and provided his Minnesota ID card. Officer Stracek checked the man's name and observed that his driving status was cancelled inimical to public safety. When Officer Stracek told the driver this, the man explained that there had to be an issue with the DMV and claimed to have passed two job screenings that check his driver's license status. The vehicle's license plates were seized and the vehicle was towed. Reports were forwarded to the prosecuting attorney's office for charges of driving after cancellation. The man later requested information on how to get his vehicle back. Officer Stracek explained that the registered owner of the vehicle would be able to get the tow slip from the front desk at Hermantown PD.

### Theft

On the morning of 03/29/23, Officer Solem was advised of theft from a motor vehicle that was parked at a Lightning Drive business overnight. The 24-year-old victim stated he had locked the vehicle at 5:30 the night before and when he returned in the morning, he found the side door unlocked. He stated that he opened the door and discovered that a bag of tool and a storage container were missing.