Woman admits false rape report

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A woman who reported she had been sexually assaulted outside a house party in Richland Center, Wis., was not telling the truth, and the case has been referred to the Richland County district attorney for possible charges relating to filing a false police report.

Police Chief John Annear said inconsistencies in the initial report along with other facts led to a follow-up interview with the woman, 19. In that follow-up, she admitted "her story as originally presented was fabricated." She had reported being confronted outside a house party Nov. 12 by a man who placed duct tape over her mouth and raped her, Annear said.

"She did admit her story was not true; it was not just our conclusion," he said.

Annear released a statement on the case Wednesday, partly in response to rumors that had spread through the county, mostly via Internet messages, about a series of rapes that was being investigated.

"We have not had a series of rapes, and to try to point the origination of those rumors would just be my speculation," he said.

In the statement, Annear said "criminal acts such as what was reported in this case, if real, can create substantial fear in a community. Fabricating a serious crime such as a forcible rape wastes valuable police resources and unnecessarily raises concerns about safety."

District Attorney William Sharp said he had not yet had a chance to review the police reports.

The Richland County Sheriff's Department has not received any reports of sexual assault, either, said Chief Deputy Tom Hougan, though deputies did meet with "one gentleman who had moved here from Texas whose way of approaching women is a little different than what the local girls are used to."

The man was interviewed on "aspects of social etiquette," Hougan said.