A report of rape is a call that puts police officers on high alert.

"Because of the egregiousness of the crime, the need is to make an apprehension as soon as possible, we throw all the resources we have available at it," says Sgt. Kelly Walker with the Waynesboro Police Department.

Walker says false reports, such as rape, are made more often than they should.

Investigations in Staunton and Waynesboro have turned up two of these cases just this week.

Walker adds, "As a standard response, we don't allow any presumptions. We don't prejudge any situations. We just allow the evidence to take us where the case is going to go."
While keeping an open mind for every call may force departments to waste time and resources dealing with a false report, it is also the response from residents that has officers concerned.

"It's particularly disturbing when you see the level of fear it raises in the community," says Walker.

He says false reports can put unnecessary stress on community members.

Walker adds, "They want to follow it. Once an arrest has been made there is a feeling in the community that we can breathe a sigh of relief."

However, officers say everyone responds differently to being a victim, and it is better to take a chance with their resources then let an actual crime slip through the cracks.

"We have learned to not allow ourselves to prejudge a situation. We've been trained not to do that," says Walker.

Waynesboro officers say after questioning an alleged rape victim about inconsistencies with her story earlier this week, she eventually confessed it was a lie. Charges of making a false report are expected.

Officers in Staunton did not file charges in the case they had this week.

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