

Former dispatcher accused of lying about rape, stalker

Taylorsville woman faces felony charges

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A former emergency dispatcher has been charged with falsely telling police she was raped and stalked over a five-month period from October to February.

Charges filed Monday in 3rd District Court state that on Oct. 7, 1999,

she eventually opened the package. Inside were some of Petersen's personal belongings, including a towel that she stated had been used in the alleged October rape.

In early February Petersen claimed she had discovered a utility knife inside her home and told police she thought the knife was left by the alleged rapist who was now allegedly stalking her. On Feb. 9 a friend called deputies to Petersen's home because she was worried about her friend's well-being. Upon entry, deputies found Peterson tied up and located a knife stuck into her bed. Petersen

district Court state that on Oct. 7, 1999, Elizabeth D. Petersen, 32, Taylorsville, called 911 to report a man had broken into her home, cut her throat and raped her. When police arrived, they found Peterson handcuffed to a bed with an injury to her neck area.

Petersen worked as a dispatcher for the Salt Lake Valley Emergency Communications Center for two years and three months before resigning April 1 for "personal reasons," according to VECC representative Gary Lancaster. VECC is the agency that dispatches 911 calls for law enforcement agencies across the Salt Lake valley.

In December VECC received a suspicious letter that appeared to be written by Petersen's alleged rapist. About the same time, a West Jordan police officer received a similar letter that taunted police efforts and suggested the alleged rapist might victimize Petersen again, court documents state.

In January, court documents state that Petersen received a suspicious package at her residence. The bomb squad and other police agencies were called in and even-

told police the man who had allegedly raped her in October had come back to her house, tied her up and threatened her with the knife, court documents state.

Later that month Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office detectives questioned Petersen about the various incidents and confronted her with handwriting evidence that indicated she had written the threatening letters herself. Petersen then admitted she had made up the original rape story and had mailed the letters and suspicious package to herself. She also told police she faked the home-invasion assault, charges filed Monday in 3rd District Court state.

VECC officials would not comment on the personal reasons surrounding Petersen's resignation.

Petersen is charged with six counts of tampering with evidence, a second-degree felony, and two counts of making a false police report, a class B misdemeanor. She faces a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and a \$5,000 fine for each second-degree felony count.

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