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## Police say reported rape was a hoax

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For the second time this week and the fifth time since May, a North Idaho woman who initially said she had been sexually attacked has recanted to police.

Coeur d'Alene police detectives have determined a report of an attempted rape Wednesday night to be false, and are preparing to seek payment from the alleged victim to cover the cost of investigating.

According to police, 25-year-old Breanne McClelland said she was jogging in a neighborhood north of Sunset Field about 8:15 p.m. Wednesday, and was attacked by a man. She told police that her attacker said he was going to rape and kill her.

The woman told police she was thrown to the ground and punched by her attacker, but managed to fight the man off by punching back and kicking him. Police arrived within minutes and cordoned off the neighborhood. A tracking dog was brought to the scene and city detectives worked into the early hours of Thursday attempting to locate witnesses and searching for evidence, said police information officer Sgt. Christie Wood.

Detective Dacia Wild, the lead investigator on the case, interviewed McClelland a second time Thursday morning, Wood said, and McClelland said her story was false. She was cited for filing a false police report, a misdemeanor.

Detectives believe she was trying to get back at, or get the attention of, a boyfriend.

On Monday, a 19-year-old Montana woman, Kimberly Tonascu, who is attending college in Coeur d'Alene, reported she had been accosted by a man in the stairwell of her apartment building, forced inside her apartment and raped.

As in Wednesday's incident, police cordoned off the neighborhood, the detectives were called away from other cases and a tracking dog was brought to the scene.

The 19-year-old told Detective Todd Hedge the next morning that she had made up the story. Hedge had interviewed Tonascu a second time to address inconsistencies in the story, Wood said. Tonascu also has been charged with the misdemeanor of filing a false report and is expected to pay restitution to police.

In both of the false reports this week, Wood said police will tally up the cost of their investigation and present it to the city attorney to seek restitution from the women.

Three false rape reports – two in Coeur d’Alene and one in Post Falls – were reported in late March and April.

Police in the area have been sensitive to such reports because they are still seeking a serial rapist believed to be responsible for seven home-invasion rapes or attempted rapes between April and November of 2003.

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