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Officer accused of rape, 3rd for APD

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ALBUQUERQUE (KRQE) - A rapist with a badge.

That is what investigators are saying about an Albuquerque Police officer who is accused of of raping a girl repeatedly.

And this is just the latest in a series of rape cases against APD officers in recent years.

Tank Guenther started with APD in 2001, but the chief of police said he will likely be out of a job, much like the other cops involved in rape cases.

"Anytime we have allegations that are made, we take them very very seriously," APD Chief Ray Schultz said.

Patrol officer Guenther is facing some serious allegations, 26 felony counts accusing him of raping a young relative over the course of three years, from 2002 to 2005.

Investigators said the girl was under 12-years-old at the time.

The Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department told APD a year ago they were investigating Guenther.

"At that time, Officer Guenther was place on administrative assignment while that investigation continued," Chief Schultz said.

This is not the first case where an Albuquerque cop was accused of rape.

There have been three in the past five years.

In 2007 Officer David Maes was convicted of raping a female suspect at a park while he was supposed to be driving her to jail.

A judge gave Maes five years probation.

A jury was deadlocked on whether VICE Detective Timothy Chavez raped a 14-year-old girl he met through a telephone chat line in 2005.

Both Maes and Chavez were quickly out of a job after they were charged.

Chief Schultz said these charges against officers are surprising.

"It always is," Schultz said. "We expect our employees to be above and beyond in performing their duties."

APD said with 1000 officers, there will be a few bad cops, and it is up to the department to take swift action.

As for Guenther's future on the force.

"I think we probably all know what the outcome will be based on the fact that he does have an outstanding criminal indictment," Chief Schultz said.

Guenther has been put on paid suspension.

An internal affairs investigation will determine if Guenther will be fired.

Chief Schultz said that investigation should last about two weeks.

Guenther is also charged with tampering with evidence.

Detectives said he shredded pages from the girl's diary to get rid of evidence.

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ROB

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