

*March 11, 2012*

Search

Article search...

Go

Pocahontas Sheriff's Department under investigation **(<http://www.register-herald.com/local/x2029122928/Pocahontas-Sheriff-s-Department-under-investigation>)**

By Sarah Plummer
Register-Herald Reporter (<http://www.register-herald.com>)

The Pocahontas County Sheriff's Department is under investigation by the West Virginia State Police and the FBI, according to a press release issued late Friday by Pocahontas County Prosecuting Attorney Donna Meadows Price.

Price stated that during the beginning of her term an individual disclosed information alleging inappropriate conduct by Lt. B.C. Totten of the Pocahontas County Sheriff's Department.

After receiving more information from two other individuals alleging inappropriate conduct by Totten, she initiated a full investigation and learned that the same conduct appeared to have been occurring for many years, she explained.

According to the release, Price sent a request for a formal investigation by the State Police to Col. C.R. "Jay" Smithers, WVSP superintendent, on Aug. 4, 2011. She asked for an officer stationed outside Pocahontas County to be assigned to the investigation.

The press release continues, "On Aug. 23, 2011, I contacted William J. Ihlenfeld II, United States Attorney for the Northern District of West Virginia, regarding this investigation and advised him of the possibility of federal implications the investigation may reveal."

First Lt. R.J. Simon of the State Police and an FBI special agent have been actively involved with the investigation, she said.

Price noted that following the advice of the Prosecuting Attorney's Institute, she recused herself as the prosecutor handling the matter to eliminate any appearance of bias and a special prosecutor has been appointed.

Price did not release the names of the victims to protect their privacy.

“I have maintained the position that I have no tolerance for those entrusted to protect us who abuse their positions and authority,” she commented.

— E-mail: [splummer@ register-herald.com](mailto:splummer@register-herald.com)

The Register-Herald, Beckley, West Virginia 801 N. Kanawha St., P.O. Box 2398, Beckley, WV,
25802