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Essex sheriff's officer from Wayne charged with sexually abusing two girls

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2012 LAST UPDATED: THURSDAY OCTOBER 11, 2012, 10:01 PM

BY ABBOTT KOLOFF AND JUSTO BAUTISTA

STAFF WRITERS

THE RECORD

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A 24-year [Essex County](#) law enforcement veteran from [Wayne](#) was arrested Thursday and charged with sexually abusing two juvenile girls, both of whom were family friends, over a period of about six years, authorities said.

Thomas Ingham, 48, an [Essex County](#) sheriff's officer, was charged with sexually assaulting one girl and endangering the welfare of the other, [Passaic County](#) Pro. The alleged victims, now 18 and 17, reported the allegations to [Wayne](#) police on July 19, she said.

Ingham allegedly made a "sexually inappropriate" comm they were together in the garage at his [Wayne](#) home, whi said Christopher R. Freid, a county senior assistant prosecutor.

Ingham was arrested after an investigation by the [Passaic](#) the [Essex County](#) Sheriff's Office internal affairs unit, officials said. He has been suspended from his job without pay, said Kevin Lynch, a spokesman for the Essex County's Sheriff's Office. His salary for 2011 was \$81,639, according to a state database.

Ingham is an inactive member of the [Wayne](#) First Aid Squad, said a squad member, and taught an EMT course at the [Passaic County](#) Police Academy in Wayne, said a man who answered the phone at the academy Thursday night.

Both of the alleged victims told investigators that they had been abused by Ingham from the time they were 8 years old until they were 14, Freid said.



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Thomas Ingham

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Ingham has been charged with second-degree sexual assault and fourth-degree criminal sexual contact against the 18-year-old. The more serious assault charge is related to an allegation that the victim was 13 years old or younger when Ingham touched her sexually, Freid said. The criminal contact charge is related to sexual contact after she turned 14, he said.

Ingham also is charged with two counts each of second-degree endangering the welfare of a child and fourth-degree lewdness, one count for each victim, Freid said.

A conviction for sexual assault carries a maximum term of 10 years in prison with 85 percent of that sentence to be served before parole eligibility. Endangering the welfare of a child carries a maximum sentence of 10 years. Criminal sexual contact and lewdness each carries a maximum penalty of 18 months. Ingham was being held at the [Passaic County Jail](#) in [Paterson](#) late Thursday. His bail was set at \$150,000 with no 10 percent payment option, and he was being processed Thursday evening.

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