



**John A. Turner**  
Sheriff

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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On January 14, 2014, shortly after 11:30 AM, Walla Walla County Sheriff's deputies responded to the residence at 19391 East Highway 12, Waitsburg, regarding a possible overdose. When deputies arrived, they encountered two unresponsive individuals in one of the bedrooms, a male and a female. Paramedics were requested to the scene. Upon arrival, it was determined the female was deceased, but the male was still alive. The female was identified as Mariah Hofer, 20, of Waitsburg and the male was identified as Richard Perez, 26, of Walla Walla. Perez was rushed to St. Mary's Medical Center for treatment. Perez is still receiving treatment at St. Mary's.

During the course of the investigation, suspicious circumstances came to light, which indicated the presence of a criminal element. Sheriff's detectives, who were on the scene, are currently investigating those circumstances. The particulars of the investigation are not being disclosed to preserve the integrity of the investigation.

An autopsy is scheduled for Hofer to determine the actual cause of death.

A supplemental press release will be offered when there is more reportable information available.