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Abduction Suspect Is Sought

The Wilkes Sheriff's Department has charged a man with first-degree kidnapping and first-degree burglary in a case in which a 9-year-old Hays girl was taken from her home and raped, said Sheriff Dane Mastin.

The man charged and being sought by authorities is Ricky

Bright, 41, who is originally from Charleston, W.Va., but had been living on DAV Road in Hays, said Mastin. He said Bright was an acquaintance of the victim.

A charge of first-degree rape is pending in the case, said Mastin.

He said the girl was taken from
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her mobile home about 3 a.m. Sunday while she was sleeping and that she was sexually assaulted at an unknown location.

"It is believed that part of the alleged crimes occurred in West Virginia or Virginia. We believe she was taken up there and then brought back," Mastin said.

In addition to originally being from Charleston, W.Va., Bright still has relatives in West Virginia, said Mastin. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is assisting in the search because it involves multiple states, he said.

Mastin said the girl's mother reported her missing to authorities later Sunday. The mother found the girl walking

along Airport Road about 2 p.m. Sunday, he said.

She was taken to Wilkes Regional Medical Center, where she was treated for injuries received when she was sexually assaulted and then released, he said. Mastin said the girl was beaten, in addition to being sexually assaulted.

Mastin said Bright is on parole after being released from the N.C. Department of Corrections in January 1994. He said Bright had been in prison since October 1979 after receiving a sentence of life plus 15 years for kidnapping and attempted rape convictions in Gaston County.

The National Crime Information Center is also being used in the search for Bright.