



# NEWS RELEASE

## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

For release: Oct. 27, 2009

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### **Police investigating recent spate of residential burglaries**

*Tips leading to an arrest could earn up to \$500*

Howard County police are investigating a recent spate of residential burglaries throughout the county. Police have identified 27 residential burglaries in the past month that fit into several patterns, primarily targeting single family homes. Although the number of cases has risen in recent weeks, the county has seen a 21 percent drop overall in burglaries year-to-date compared to 2008.

Police are asking county residents to be vigilant and alert. Anyone who observes suspicious people or activities is asked to call police. Common suspicious activities include:

- A person knocking on a residential door and then leaving the area after the door is answered
- A person standing in front of an unoccupied home
- Commercial vans or trucks parked in the driveway of an unoccupied home
- Unfamiliar vehicles parked in a neighborhood, especially if they are occupied
- Vehicles moving slowly through a neighborhood with no headlights and no deliberate path
- Unusual noises, such as glass breaking or dogs barking
- A person carrying items of value or loading them into a vehicle

When reporting suspicious people or activities to police, it is helpful to note:

- A description of the vehicle, including **tag number, make, model and color**
- The **exact location** of the suspicious person or activity
- The suspicious person or vehicle's **direction of travel**
- A description of the person, including **gender, race, age, height, weight, hair color, clothing and distinguishing features**

Citizens are encouraged to be proactive and take steps to make their homes less desirable targets for burglars.

- Make your home look and sound occupied. If you have a spare car, park it in the driveway instead of the garage. Leave lamps or a television on when you are not home.
- If you will be away from home for several days, ask a neighbor to collect mail and newspapers.
- Always secure windows and doors. Consider installing a deadbolt on your front door and a Charley bar on your sliding glass door.
- Don't open your door to any unsolicited repairmen, deliverymen or salesmen.

Police are offering a reward of up to \$500 for information leading to an arrest of a burglary suspect. Anyone with information should call 410-313-3200. Callers may remain anonymous.

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