



# NEWS RELEASE

## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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### **Recent Increase in Burglaries Prompts Police to Offer Safety Tips**

With reports of residential burglaries up in recent weeks, the Howard County Police Department is reminding citizens to protect their homes with a few simple safety tips.

Since the first week in November, police have received 26 reports of apartments being burglarized throughout the county. And while apartments seem to be the recent targets, the following tips can help all residents protect their homes and property.

#### **Don't invite crime home for the holidays:**

- Keep blinds and curtains closed so thieves can't see valuables inside your home. Never display gifts where they can be seen through windows or doors.
- Arrange for a trusted neighbor to pick up any packages delivered to your home while you're away or at work.
- Always lock all doors and windows of your car and house, even when someone is home.
- Criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts. Ask for identification and call a main office to verify employment.
- It's not uncommon for people to try to take advantage of others' generosity during the holidays by going door to door for charitable donations when there's no charity involved. Ask for identification and how the funds will be used. Donate to a charitable organization you trust and respect instead.
- After the holidays, don't advertise gifts received by the boxes left for the garbage collection. Destroy boxes and place in a dark garbage bag.

Anyone who sees something or someone suspicious, particularly in an apartment complex, is urged to contact police. The Howard County Police Department wishes all residents a safe and happy holiday season.

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