



# NEWS RELEASE

## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Contacts: Sherry Llewellyn  
PFC Jennifer Reidy  
(410) 313-2236

### **Police Remind Citizens to Lock Doors, Even When At Home**

The Howard County Police Department is reminding citizens to not leave doors and windows unsecured in their homes, even when they are inside their residences. The effort is aimed at reducing the number of burglaries that occur while the victim is at home, known as “cat burglaries,” in the county.

Howard County has seen a recent increase in this type of crime over the past few months. Since September, 19 town homes or single family houses have been entered through an open door or window, often while the victims are sleeping at night. Most often, the criminals are entering homes between midnight and 6 a.m. and taking items such as cash, credit cards and laptops. Many burglars are entering through elevated porch sliders, which people often leave unlocked.

Police want to encourage citizens to lock all doors, not only when leaving their homes during the day, but also at night while sleeping. Police are providing the following tips to prevent becoming a victim:

- Keep all valuables in a secure place or on a different level of your home than where the entrances and exits are located. Cat burglars are less likely to go to different levels of a home to search for cash, credit cards and valuables.
- Keep holiday gifts out of sight from anyone trying to look into your home.
- Keep gates surrounding your property locked.
- Leave spotlights or porch lights on throughout the night, or install motion sensors.
- Keep doors and windows locked, even during the day while your family is active in your home. If your family is all on one level, a cat burglar could enter another floor unnoticed.
- Call the police if you notice any suspicious activity in your neighborhood or notice suspicious people in your neighborhood late at night.

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