



# NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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## **Police Investigating Two Home Invasions in Columbia** *Detectives Offer \$2,500 Reward, Remind Citizens to Lock Up*

Howard County police are investigating two cases in the last week of home invasion robberies in Columbia, one involving a sexual assault. Detectives are offering a reward of \$2,500 for information leading to the arrest of the suspect.

In the first case, the suspect entered a ground floor apartment in the 5300 block of Smooth Meadow Way around 8:30 a.m. Dec. 6. The resident, a 60-year-old woman, heard someone enter the apartment and was confronted by the suspect. He bound and gagged the victim, ransacked the apartment, and stole money, jewelry, credit cards and her car. She was not seriously injured during the incident. Her car was recovered in Baltimore.

The second case occurred last night when a man who police believe is the same suspect entered an apartment in the 5200 block of Brook Way around 6 p.m. The 24-year-old female resident came home and was confronted by the suspect, who was already inside. The man struck the victim repeatedly and bound and gagged her. He sexually assaulted her and stole electronics and cash before fleeing.

Police have only a vague description of the suspect in both cases and can only confirm at this time that he is a black male.

In each case, the suspect entered the residence through an *unlocked* window or sliding glass door. Police are urging citizens to keep all doors and windows locked at all times, even when the house is occupied.

Police have increased patrols in these neighborhoods and are canvassing the community. Officers also are posting reward flyers in the area asking citizens to provide information to police that could help close the investigation.

Anyone with information about these cases is urged to call police at 410-313-3200.

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