



City of Arts & Innovation

# PRESS RELEASE

**Police Department**  
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**Chief of Police**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **CONTACT:**

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## **DETECTIVES SEEKING PUBLIC'S HELP IN HOME BURGLARY SERIES**

RIVERSIDE, CA – Beginning the past January, a series of residential burglaries have occurred in the Alessandro Heights, Hawarden Hills, and Mission Grove neighborhoods of Riverside that investigators determined members of a South American theft group to be involved. This group is a criminal organization that has been operating throughout the United States to commit home burglaries, and are suspected of about seventeen in our city this year. Detectives assigned to our Property Crimes Unit are seeking the public's help in providing any information that could lead to these suspects' identity.

Typically, these suspects work in groups of three to six South American males and target homes that are adjacent to a vacant lot, arroyo, or greenbelt area. Most times they will enter the property from the rear or backyard while one or two suspects act as lookouts from getaway vehicles parked along the street. They enter the home by smashing a sliding or glass door, even climbing onto a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor balcony during some instances.



The suspects have been described as South American men dressed in hats, hoodie sweatshirts, face coverings or masks, gloves, backpacks, and carrying flashlights. On some occasions, their lookouts have been women and the getaway vehicles have been high-end cars, SUV's, or minivans.



Most of the reported burglaries have occurred in the nighttime hours between 6:00 p.m. and midnight, often on the weekends while homeowners are away. They have also been known to surveil target homes beforehand.



“Our detectives have been diligently working to solve these cases,” stated Captain Chris Wagner of the Special Operations Division. “We want to reassure our community these burglaries are not related to the series of home invasion robberies in the same area earlier this year, but to encourage residents to keep looking out for one another by reporting anything suspicious they see in their neighborhoods.”

Our Property Crimes Unit would like to remind community members of a few safety tips to better protect your home from a burglary.

- Make your home look occupied when gone
- Lock all outside doors and windows, including property gates, before you leave or go to bed
- Consider installing a security and/or camera system, and if you already have one, make sure they are working properly and not obstructed
- Do not share your plans to be away on social media
- If you own a safe, make sure it is bolted to a steel or cement slab
- Get to know your neighbors and let them know when you will be away for an extended time

Anyone with information regarding these burglaries and suspects are urged to contact Detective Andy Cook at (951) 353-7953 or [ACook@RiversideCA.gov](mailto:ACook@RiversideCA.gov), or Detective Christian Wilcox at (951) 353-7952 or [CWilcox@RiversideCA.gov](mailto:CWilcox@RiversideCA.gov). Those wishing to remain anonymous can email [RPDTips@RiversideCA.gov](mailto:RPDTips@RiversideCA.gov), or download the Riverside Police Department's "Atlas 1" mobile app and use the "Send a Message" feature. Our app can be downloaded at [iOS Atlas 1 App](#) or [Android Atlas 1 App](#).