

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Multiple Rapes And Home Invasions Affecting St. Thomas; Latest Rape Occurred Wednesday

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ST. THOMAS -- The Virgin Islands Police Department on Friday warned St. Thomas residents of multiple cases of home invasion and rape that have been occurring in the past month. A map provided by police [shows where in St. Thomas the incidents have taken place](#), and a Phillsbury Heights rental property group -- the same St. Thomas community where a woman was [viciously attacked and raped in August](#) -- said one of their tenants was the third victim to be raped in recent months by a black male described as a serial rapist, who has been targeting Phillsbury Heights women. The V.I.P.D., however, says only two rape incidents have been reported.

And a [post](#) on "What's Going On, St. Thomas?" A popular Facebook group providing information on all things relative to St. Thomas, called on all residents of Phillipsburg Heights to provide as much information as possible to the V.I.P.D. and the media, in an attempt to stop the suspect from continuing on his rampage.

The V.I.P.D. said today that all leads were being heavily pursued, and that the department has strategies in place to address the matter.

According to V.I.P.D. Media Specialist Sakeeda Freeman, the most recent rape occurred on Wednesday at roughly 6:53 a.m. Officers were dispatched to the Roy Lester Schneider Regional Medical Center in regards to a report of a rape, and met with the victim who explained that she was raped by an unknown black male inside a home where she's employed as a house sitter.

The V.I.P.D. provided tips on how persons can protect themselves from becoming victims of rape and home invasion. They include the following:

- If you have a glass sliding door, place a metal pole or strong stick on the tracks of the door. No matter how much someone jolts or pulls the door, it will not open.
- If you're moving into a new apartment, request for your locks to be changed. Other people can have a copy without your knowledge.
- Be aware of what you put on social media. Information can disclose your location to the wrong individuals.
- A great way to discourage intruders is to make them think you're not alone.
- Always have some means of personal self-defense. There are individuals that specialize in the instruction of women's self-defense.
- Always lock your doors when you're home, especially if you're alone.
- Be aware of your environment at all times, especially at night or when alone.
- Always have your keys at hand when entering your car or your residence, especially if you're alone.
- Don't make your home easily accessible for prowlers by leaving chairs, ladders, or any object that can be used as a tool to jump on or hop over into your residence.
- Always do whatever you need to make yourself safe and secure. No one should ever be a victim of any crime.

The force's Crime Prevention Unit provides house assessments upon request that can assist in ensuring that homes are not easy targets for crime, according to Ms. Freeman. Officer Chesterfield of the Crime Prevention Unit can be reached at 340-998-0314, she added.

If you have any information regarding these incidents please contact the Police Department at 340-774-2211, or the Criminal Investigation Bureau at 340-714-9807. You can also remain anonymous by contacting Crime Stoppers USVI at 1-800-222-8477 or dial 911.

Correction: September 9, 2016

A previous version of this story, because of an oversight, stated that the V.I.P.D. did not include the location where the rape and home invasion incidents were occurring. We've

updated the story to reflect the correct information.

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