

## **If You're the Victim of a Burglary, Help Police Identify the Burglar**

If you return home and unexpectedly find a door or window open and realize you have been burglarized, do NOT enter the residence; instead, immediately call the police. While you wait for the police, do NOT touch anything, do NOT sneeze or cough on top of any potential evidence, do NOT walk in any area that may contain evidence, and do NOT attempt to clean up any mess -- you may compromise important evidence. When the police arrive, point out anything out of the ordinary. A drinking glass out of place, a cigarette butt, a discarded garment, a drop of blood, a mask, a glove, or any item that does not belong in your residence or that you do not recognize may help convict your burglar! Similarly, any items or areas that the burglar may have touched or handled, such as jewelry boxes, may help identify him.

### **Typical Sources of a Burglar's DNA or Fingerprints**

- Entry tools: screwdriver, crowbar, hammer, bat, etc.
- Blood and/or fingerprints on window glass or on doorframes
- Items that may have been moved or touched
- Cigarette butts, half-burned cigarettes
- Beverage bottle or can, a drinking glass or cup
- Half-eaten food
- Toothpicks and other items that may contain saliva
- Feces or urine
- Semen and clothing/bedding that may contain semen
- Hair and items that may contain hair
- Hat, mask, bandana, or other headgear
- Gloves, Eyeglasses
- Tissues, Kleenex, handkerchief
- Discarded bandage
- Skin scrapings, dandruff, fingernail clippings, etc.
- Tape, cord, rope
- Used condom



### **DNA Evidence**

• **What is DNA?** DNA is a molecule contained in the nucleus of virtually every cell in the human body. It contains a unique genetic code that can be used to positively identify criminals, including burglars. A person's DNA is the same, regardless of whether it is from blood, saliva, semen, sweat, hair, etc.

• **Does everyone have his/her own unique DNA makeup?** Yes! With rare exceptions, such as identical twins, each person's DNA is different. Therefore, DNA collected from a crime scene can help catch burglars

• **Has DNA ever been used in court to convict a burglar?** Yes! The Denver District Attorney's Office has used DNA successfully in the past to convict burglars and aggressively prosecutes burglars in our community.