

COPS HOPE DETAILS HELP NAB RAPISTS 3 SUSPECTS SOUGHT IN SERIES OF DETROIT ATTACKS

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Detroit police are seeking three men they believe are responsible for three separate strings of sexual attacks on young boys and women, mostly on the city's west side, officials said Thursday.

One is blamed for attacks on four young boys in two different areas along Livernois. The other two have attacked three women each, one in a west side neighborhood and the other on the city's north side, police said.

Officials said they put out word about the attackers so residents would be on guard. But it is not unusual to have several pattern criminals operating at any time, said Lt. Mike Hall.

Community group members said they were concerned about the attacks, even though they had not received widespread attention.

One man is wanted for four sexual attacks on boys since September. Police said he confronted his victims with a gun, forced them into a car and drove them to a remote area where he sodomized them.

Detectives said the strongest connection between the cases is the description of the man and how he operates, although the composite descriptions given by the victims vary. The man is white, between 40 and 50 years old and about 5 feet 7 inches.

Another attacker raped three women in January, all in a half-mile stretch around Cloverlawn and Schoolcraft, police said. The **rapist** approached each victim while she was either getting into or out of her car.

In two cases the approaches were made outside the women's homes. Police said he brandished a gun and demanded jewelry, money and ATM bank cards. He then forced the women to drive to a remote location where he raped them. The man is black, 19-24, about 5 feet 8, clean shaven and with a slim build.

The third string of attacks occurred in the area of East 7 Mile and Russell, just east of I-75, in December and January. An attacker described as a black man in his early 20s, between 5 feet 6 and 6 feet, approached women on the street or at bus stops, pulled a gun and forced them into nearby alleys where he sexually assaulted them.

An attack Thursday morning on a 15-year-old girl who was waiting for a bus at East 7 Mile and John R while on her way to school raised concerns that the attack might be part of the pattern. But Lt. Robert Gerds of the Detroit Police sex crimes unit said it appeared to be unrelated to the others, because it occurred farther west, and the victim described an attacker 10-20 years older than in the other cases.

Mary Kraatz, a community activist who works regularly as a volunteer at Holy Redeemer schools near where two of the boys were attacked, said the attacks had sparked little community discussion.

"I haven't heard anybody talking about them," Kraatz said. "I usually hear people talking about these things."

Laura Cole, president of the Hartwell and Neighbors Association, said people in her neighborhood were very concerned about the rapes along Cloverlawn. She said she and her neighbors have seen fewer police patrols in their area since the new administration took over last year.

"They said we have more police but where are they?" Cole said. "We have senior citizens, young girls going to school, so we need some police presence."

Anyone with information about these cases can contact the Detroit Police sex crimes unit at 1-313-596-1950, anytime.

Caption: Map; Drawing

S: A composite sketch of a man police say assaulted four boys in Detroit. A composite sketch of a man police say raped three women in Detroit.

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