By Amy Sylvestri

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There were two armed home invasion robberies in San Leandro last Thursday, a crime that police say is still rare, but has been happening more frequently in the Bay Area these past few months.

“We are still looking into whether the victims in these cases were targeted or selected at random,” said Lt. Randy Brandt of the San Leandro police. “It’s unusual, but something we are seeing more of throughout the Bay Area.”

At least three men entered a home on the 400 block of Cape Cod Drive via an open window around 4 a.m. on Dec. 13 and some of them were armed, according to Brandt.

The suspects demanded cash from the victims and the victims complied. No one was hurt.

Also on Dec. 13, at 6 p.m., an apartment on the 1200 block of Davis Street was broken into, Brandt said.

The front door was left open and at least three suspects entered and confronted the family at home, again demanding cash. The victims complied, and the suspects left.

In both cases the exact number of suspects or a detailed description were not given by victims, only that in both cases the suspects were black males around 20 years old, wearing dark clothing and carrying handguns at the time of the robberies.

Though the suspect descriptions were similar in both cases, it is not yet known if they are connected, Brandt said.

“If you get woken up from sleep and someone is robbing you, I think the natural reaction is to

not get a good look at them and just get them out of your home," said Brandt. "Of course, we want people to be good witnesses, but safety is the priority."

Home invasions are rare, but at least five have occurred in the city so far this year. A man on Creekside Court was robbed in April, woken by home invaders in his bedroom.

Also in April, three men robbed a Victoria Circle family at gunpoint. The suspects were arrested in that case.

In September, a family was held hostage for 45 minutes in the middle of the night at gunpoint in their home on Marineview Drive by three masked suspects.

Robberies (everything from these home invasions to purse snatchings) are up 28 percent year-to-date over 2011 figures – with 255 robberies from January through November.

San Leandro also averages nearly two residential or commercial burglaries a day – so far 614

burglaries January through November.

Brandt said that alert neighbors are some of the police department's best resources in catching burglars. He said it's also a good idea to leave a light on and keep your doors and windows locked to deter criminals.