



Police ID slain home invasion suspect

By [Mike Morris](#) and [John Spink](#)
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The man who police say was killed by a homeowner during an attempted sexual assault was identified Thursday as Israel Perez Puentes, 34, of Alpharetta.

A Gwinnett County woman shot and killed Puentes Wednesday morning after the knife-wielding man attacked her in the shower, police said.

The incident happened about 6:30 a.m. at a home in the 2800 block of East Mount Tabor Circle.

Gwinnett police Cpl. Edwin Ritter told the AJC that the woman, who is in her early 50s, was getting out of the shower when the intruder, who she did not know, turned out the lights and attacked her.

She fell back into the shower, injuring her back, and attempted to fight Puentes off with the shower rod, Ritter said.

"She was telling him that she has money and please don't hurt her," Ritter said.

"He forced her into her bedroom," Ritter said. "Once inside the bedroom, she retrieved a .22-caliber pistol and shot him several times." Ritter characterized the attack as an attempted sexual assault.

The suspect ran outside the house and collapsed. He was taken to Gwinnett Medical Center, where he died.

The victim ran to a neighbor's house after the attack, and was later taken to Duluth Medical Center for treatment of minor injuries. She was released from the hospital and returned to her home just before noon Wednesday.

Neighbor Rebecca Wisecup told the AJC that she was awakened about 6:30 a.m. to the sounds of someone screaming and crying.

"I came out of the bedroom and out into the hallway and it was just horrible screaming, and I found our neighbor on our kitchen floor," Wisecup said. "She was naked, just out of the shower. She was screaming that somebody tried to kill her, and 'Oh my God, oh, my God, he tried to kill me.'"

"She said she shot him and he got away, or she didn't know where he was, so we called the police," Wisecup said, tearing up as she recounted the morning's events. "I tried to get her up out of the floor and got a robe on her and got her to sit down, and within a few minutes the police showed up and took care of her."

Wisecup said that the victim told her that "she was in the shower, and the bathroom light went off, and she opened the shower curtain and there was a man that held a knife up to her throat."

Wisecup said her neighbor is a "a nice lady, just a sweet lady. Thank God she's OK and she had a weapon to

protect herself with."

Ritter said the victim would not be charged in the incident.

"She responded to the deadly threat with deadly force," he said.

Ritter said police were checking to see if Puentes might be involved in other crimes in the area.

Marsha Day, who lives down the street, said her house has been broken into twice since she moved into the neighborhood 11 years ago.

"Fortunately, I wasn't home either time, but I've lost a lot of stuff because of break-ins," Day said.

"That's awesome that she had something to protect herself with," neighbor Michelle Church said.

"I don't know how she was good enough to get her gun like that," Church said. "She's very lucky and fortunate that she was able to defend herself. Good for her."

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