

Honolulu - Hawaii

Fire Escape System Could Save Lives Locally

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HONOLULU (KHNL)- Following two high rise fires this past spring, many condo owners say it's too expensive to retrofit older complexes with sprinkler systems. But now a new fire escape system could save lives.

Sprinkler systems could likely save the building. But if owners are not willing to make the investment, there is still hope the residents could all flee safely.

Last March this highrise on Piikoi street caught on fire. A month later firefighters rushed to this fire at Kapiolani Manor.

Robert McKay was in his 18th story unit that day, "My fiance saw the smoke and stuff dropping and we just walked down the fire escape."

But what if flames blocked their exit?

"Actually I have I know I wouldn't get out I'd have to go on my balcony and wait for help, I wouldn't be able to get out I live on one of the top floors that's why I can't jump," says McKay.

This is a new fire escape system called safexit. Sales Representative Michael Gjede explains, "It won't save building itself from the fire but it may allow occupants who are trapped to get out of the building. So it's a least expensive alternative to save lives."

Residents can pull out the safety harness if flames block their escape. A valuable resource according to McKay, " I think it would be a pretty good investment to make for the people who live on very top floors good investment especially with a lot of our apartment buildings how old they are. They don't have any sprinkler systems or anything like that."

McKay says he did rappel once as a kid and he thinks he could safely use the harness system if his life depended on it.



Robert McKay

