

## FDNY Black Sunday

The Black Sunday fire -- the Jan. 23, 2005 Bronx blaze that claimed the lives of FDNY Firefighters Lt. John Bellew and Lt. Curtis Meyran -- was "a major turning point in the fire service." That's what Jeff Cool, then a firefighter at Rescue 3, one of six trapped in the apartment building that day, recently said about the fire. Ladder 27's Eugene Stalowski and Brendan Cawley bailed from a window much like Bellew and Meyran did, but survived. Luckily for Cool and Rescue 3 colleague Joseph DiBernardo, they had use of a life safety rope which Cool had bought from Firehouse Expo in Baltimore the year before. During a presentation at Firehouse Expo in 2006, Cool said, "If that rope wasn't there, we would've been dead." Nine months after the tragedy, the FDNY re-issued the ropes after they stopped providing them to firefighters in 2000. This past August, New York's Governor Eliot Spitzer signed a law requiring employers to provide firefighters throughout New York, excluding the FDNY, with life safety ropes.



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