

Putin Lifts Fines for Unused Electricity

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia lifted fines paid by some electricity consumers for not using the full amount of power purchased under their contracts, the government said in an e-mailed statement.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signed an order Friday lifting fines for consumers with connections up to 750 kilovolt-amperes that do not fully use contracted electricity volumes, the statement said. The order also lifts rules on the amount of hours over which the power is consumed, effective April 1.

Agricultural companies asked the government to review their relationship with electricity companies during a visit by Putin and President Dmitry Medvedev to the Stavropol region on Oct. 25, Putin said last week at a government meeting.

Consumers face "unjustified additional expenses" for power and should not have to pay for unconsumed electricity, Putin said. So-called take-or-pay clauses are also used in Gazprom's exports of natural gas.

"When those rules are used for exports, that's still understandable," Putin said, according to a transcript posted on the government web site. "The volumes are large, for starters, and secondly, we're talking about major consumers that should also be planning their work."

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