The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
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Firefighters Battle Towering Inferno in Moskva-City

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April 02, 2012

The towering inferno blazing on Monday after a tarp fell on a floodlight. **Sergei Karpukhin**

The towering inferno that tore through the 67th floor of the under-construction Vostok tower in Moskva-City may have costs millions of dollars in damages, Interfax reported Tuesday.

No one was hurt in the Monday evening blaze that took firefighters about four hours to put out.

Estimates as to how much repairs will cost varied widely. Mikhail Dvorkovich, spokesman for the building's construction company Potok Beskonechnost, said the damage would cost only a few million rubles to fix and would be covered by insurance, Interfax reported early Tuesday morning.

But an unidentified insurance expert told Interfax later that repairs could cost millions of dollars and Vladimir Skortsov, director of the insurance company responsible,

AlfaStrakhovanie, would not confirm whether insurance would cover the damage.

“The insurance contract has a complicated structure, and we are currently in contact with the client and trying to sort out all aspects of the problem,” he told Interfax.

Nikita Zhuravlev, a second spokesman for Potok Beskonechnost, said the tower is insured for up to $300 million, Interfax reported.

At its peak the flames had spread out over an area of 300 square meters and to neighboring floors. Officials said the building sustained no major structural damage and was not in risk of collapse.

Firefighters needed the help of three helicopters carrying water from the nearby Moscow River to extinguish the flames.

The cause of the blaze was not immediately clear. An Emergency Situations Ministry spokesman, shown speaking on television channel RT at the time of the fire, said he believed an advertising banner had caught fire.

Later reports suggested that floodlights installed on a crane had caused flammable material used as a cover for the concrete to catch fire, Interfax reported.

An unidentified source at a real estate firm in charge of selling offices in the building said that he did not expect the fire to affect what was already low demand, Interfax reported.

The Federation complex consists of three connected structures: the Zapad, or West, tower, which is completely built and stands at a height of 243 meters; the Vostok, or East, tower, which is under construction and is 360 meters tall; and a 506-meter spire between them. The complex is supposed to become the tallest in Europe when completed.

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