

Putin Supports Public Oversight of Utilities

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin called for creation of public councils to oversee the utilities sector, following attention to the topic from the opposition.

Putin said such councils would be able to help authorities "monitor tariffs in the regions and control the work of apartment service companies," RIA-Novosti reported Monday.

The president made the comments Monday during a government meeting in Sochi on economic issues in the housing sector.

Putin's call to boost the public's role in the problematic utilities sector comes several months after opposition leader Alexei Navalny launched a similar project.

The Navalny effort, called RosZhKKh, encourages people to send complaints about the poor work of utilities providers to a website, which alerts the proper authorities.

Proposals to provide public oversight of the utilities sector have frequently been received from citizens, Putin said.

The poor condition and rising costs of housing are the biggest concerns for 57 percent of Russians, a recent survey by state-run pollster VTsIOM found. That is 7 percentage points higher than last year's number.

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