

Cautious Distillery Management Removes Vodka Monument

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The 3-meter-tall monument to vodka had been a local landmark in the town of Glazov in the Udmurt republic. **Aliona Chudanova**

A monument to a bottle of vodka was toppled over fears that it could be seen as an illegal advertisement for the country's favorite drink.

The 3-meter-tall metal sculpture had become a local landmark in the Urals town of Glazov, in the Udmurt republic 1,200 kilometers east of Moscow. But residents woke up one morning last week to discover it had disappeared, leaving only an empty plinth.

The bottle's fall reflects a new, sober spirit of the age in Russia under President Vladimir Putin, a judo black belt who rides, flies and dives for the TV cameras but is rarely seen raising a glass — unless to toast a billion-dollar oil deal.

Putin signed a ban on all alcohol advertising in July, while other laws have banned sales of

alcohol from street kiosks or after 11 p.m at night.

Initial reports suggested that local authorities were behind the disappearance of the memorial, erected 13 years ago to mark the centenary of the local Glazovsky spirits factory.

Among other products, the factory produces a vodka brand called Kalashnikov. The famous weapons designer is a native son of the Udmurt republic.

But factory bosses later told local media outlets that they had removed the monument from public view over fears that it could run afoul of the strict new advertising laws.

“The bottle monument ... might be considered an advertisement for our products. So the decision was made to remove it,” said Dmitry Pozdeyev, the head of the factory’s legal department. The sculpture was moved into the factory.

Russian media ironically suggested that anti-drinking campaigners have more work left to do in the region.

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