

Chelyabinsk Schools, Hospitals Reopen After Meteor-Related Repairs

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Schools and hospitals reopened in the Chelyabinsk region on Monday following the repairs of major damages from Friday's meteorite strike and the subsequent debris fallout, the press service of the region's governor announced.

The Federal Consumer Protection Service announced Sunday that all schools and hospitals in the Chelyabinsk region had been repaired and could resume normal operations. In most of the damaged buildings, workers had to replace windows that were blown out by the shock wave from the meteorite's explosion, Interfax reported.

Repair work had to be done quickly due to the cold weather, with temperatures in the region falling below minus 20 degrees Celsius.

The meteorite that crashed Friday morning weighed about 10,000 tons, with a 17-meter diameter. It disintegrated after entering the Earth's atmosphere, exploding above

the Chelyabinsk region and causing major damage and panic throughout the Urals Federal District.

Fragments of the meteorite were later found in the Chebarkul lake, prompting scientists to suggest naming the meteorite "Chebarkul" in the international catalog of meteorites.

Viktor Grokhovsky, a spokesman for the meteorology committee of the Russian Academy of Sciences, said specialists weren't allowed to go near the scene of the crash, but the meteorite was later delivered to a university lab for analysis.

Earlier, the regional branch of the Interior Ministry reported on Feb. 15 that several fragments of the meteorite had been found in the vicinity of the lake, but a search on Feb. 16 yielded no results.

Experts put the power of the blast at 500,000 tons of TNT, making it the most powerful meteoric explosion since the Tunguska meteorite in 1908.

The fallout from the explosion affected residents in the Tyumen, Kurgan, Sverdlovsk regions and the northern parts of Kazakhstan. The Chelyabinsk region sustained the most damage, with blown-out windows in 4,715 residential and commercial buildings housing about 100,000 families.

Over 1,000 people were reported injured, 52 of them hospitalized. Preliminary estimates put the amount of material damage at 1 billion rubles (\$33 million), Interfax said.

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