

Snow Snarls Moscow Traffic and Diverts 13 Flights

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Heavy snowfall brought Moscow traffic to a standstill Monday and diverted 13 flights overnight.

The snowstorm, which began Sunday morning, dumped about a third of March's average precipitation on the city. Weather forecasters said the snowfall would continue throughout Monday but gradually ease off.

The Emergency Situations Ministry warned that the snow would reduce visibility on roads and cause other hazards, raising the risk of accidents and injuries.

"The snow could cause damage to power lines and lead to the collapse of large and poorly secured advertisement banners," the ministry said in a statement carried by Interfax.

On Monday morning, the heavy snowfall created chaos on the roads, with 20 kilometers of

bumper-to-bumper traffic on the Moscow Ring Road, Interfax said.

Other major traffic jams occurred on Leningradskoye, Dmitrovskoye, Shchelkovskoye and Kashirskoye shosses, Shosse Entuziastov, Lenisky and Kutuzovsky prospekts and Prospekt Mira.

Overnight, 13 airplanes headed for Sheremetyevo Airport north of Moscow and Vnukovo to the city's west were diverted to Domodedovo Airport in the southeast because they were unable to land in the snowstorm.

"Due to heavy snowfall, the pilots of 13 aircraft that were supposed to land at Vnukovo and Sheremetyevo decided to land at the Domodedovo Airport," an air traffic control official told Interfax.

Flights were taking off and landing on schedule at all three airports Monday.

Top meteorologist Roman Vilfand said that such unusually cold weather occurs in March once in 30 to 40 years, RIA-Novosti reported.

Strong winds are expected over the next 24 hours, with temperatures hovering between minus 5 and 7 degrees Celsius.

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