

Snowstorm a Cruel Joke for Muscovites on April Fools' Day

By [Allison Quinn](#)

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Moscow was hit with 40 percent of April's norm of snow Monday. But next weekend's forecast sees highs of 10 C. **Vladimir Filonov**

April Fools' Day proved to be no laughing matter in Moscow on Monday, with the city receiving up to 40 percent of the month's norm of snow in one day.

The city was blanketed with up to 18 millimeters of snow through Monday, or "up to 40 percent of the norm for April, which usually sees a total of 44 millimeters," a meteorologist from the city's weather bureau told Interfax.

"The first half of the week, especially Monday, will be nasty: snow, snow with rain and rain," the meteorologist said.

The unusually heavy snowfall helped set an April record for snow cover at 65 centimeters as measured at a weather station at the All-Russia Exhibition Center. That broke the previous

mark of 56 centimeters reached in both 1895 and 1942.

Temperatures, however, were warmer than the weekend, rising to 5 degrees Celsius by the afternoon in parts of the city. The snow turned into rain with the warmer temperatures.

Muscovites can also expect temperatures to rise to about 10 C by next weekend.

The city's airports all operated as usual Monday despite the heavy snow.

As the snow continued to fall Monday, causing massive traffic jams and sometimes flaring tempers, at least one native New Yorker was taking a philosophical outlook on the slushy streets.

"As winters go, this has not been a particularly bad one," said Gregg Robins, a musician who has spent a number of winters in Russia since his first in 1989 and recently released an album titled, appropriately, "Snowing in April."

"After a warm, extended summer, we sort of skipped autumn. I hope the current weather does not mean we are going to skip spring, too," Robins said.

He said the inspiration for "Snowing in April," which is available as a free download on his [website](#), came from the snowfall last April and the corresponding traffic jams. "That said," he added, "'Snowing in April' is clearly a metaphor for life in Moscow, with the challenges the winter presents and the desire to get away for some sun whenever possible."

Meanwhile, the extended winter weather, which has seen a 50-year record in snowfall, prompted at least one April Fools' joke on Monday. Business FM radio [reported](#) that some companies were planning to cash in on the overabundance of snow by turning it into drinking water and creating "snow diets."

Maria Gippokrat, cited by the radio station as a dietician, said she had already appealed to Russia's chief sanitary official, Gennady Onishchenko, about plans to process the snow and make it safe for eating.

"For those who love sweets, for example, snow can be a wonderful alternative to a sweet dessert," she said in comments on the station's website. "It has no calories whatsoever and is absolutely free. You can go outside, to a park — avoiding, of course, those places where dogs have been walked, and use the snow as an easy and light snack."

[Snowing in April photogallery](#)

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