

Elections Official in Hot Water for Cursing at Activists (Video)

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A YouTube video showing a white Mercedes used by an elections official trying to illegally park on a Moscow sidewalk and the official and her driver angrily lashing out at StopHam activists afterward. (Russian only)

The country's top elections official has apologized after a co-worker was caught on video threatening and cursing out a group of activists who had blocked her from illegally parking her car.

In the video, posted on YouTube on April 15, a Mercedes car tries to park on a Moscow sidewalk and then nearly crushes activists with the group StopHam who block it.

A furious woman, identified by national media as Margaret Arakelyan, 24, proceeds to swear at the activists and tell them that she can park anywhere she wants because she is a government official.

She also warns the activists, who refuse to back down, that she will "find" them if the video of the incident appeared online. She is joined in her tirade by the car's male driver.

Arakelyan is senior legal consultant for the Central Elections Commission, Rosbalt news agency reported.

Vladimir Churov, head of the Central Elections Commission, apologized for his co-worker's rudeness and "other troubles connected with this incident" before the start of a elections commission meeting Thursday.

"I have ordered a thorough investigation, including into the question of [the co-worker's] professional competence," he said, RIA-Novosti reported.

"If the reports are confirmed, the matter will be resolved immediately," he said, without elaborating.

StopHam targets bad drivers by preventing them from parking their cars illegally and placing large, reprimanding stickers on the windshields of already parked vehicles. The group videotapes its encounters with drivers, many of whom become enraged and insist they are willing to risk paying traffic fines if it means they can drive however they wish.

The Central Elections Commission isn't the only state organization to have been left red-faced over rude employees in recent weeks. A [YouTube video](#) surfaced last month that shows seething Russian Post employees swearing at a customer, throwing him out of the post office, and then chasing him with a broom down a street in a town in the Moscow region. After that incident, Russian Post instructed its employees not to allow video recordings to be made in post offices.

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