

State of Emergency Declared in Irkutsk Region Due to Fires

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The administration of the Siberian Irkutsk region has declared a state of emergency after forest fires spread to local villages, prompting large-scale evacuations.

More than 39,000 hectares of land in the Irkutsk region had been engulfed by 77 forest fires by Monday, the regional forestry department said, Interfax reported.

Irkutsk Governor Sergei Yeroschenko issued orders Sunday night to declare the state of emergency, banning all commercial activity in forests and dispatching additional resources to fight the fires, the local branch of the Emergency Situations Ministry said in an online statement.

About 300 people were evacuated Sunday from the village of Dalny, where fires have

destroyed two dozen homes, the ministry said, Interfax reported.

Local news website NewsBabr.com also cited the ministry as saying that fires at a sawmill in the village of Bratsk and in the Usolsky region had been extinguished by Sunday night.

But a reader on the news portal denounced the ministry's statement as a "lie."

"I don't know what it's like in Bratsk, but in Usolye everything was covered by thick smoke yesterday from the morning until late night," the reader said in a comment Monday.

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