

Illegal Parkers to Receive SMS Before Cars Towed

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Drivers will receive an SMS before their car is moved.

Moscow drivers will soon be able to get advance warning that their vehicle is about to be towed, Kommersant reported Monday.

Starting next month, drivers who have registered for the service will receive an SMS 15 to 20 minutes before their car is moved, allowing them time to move it and avoid towing costs, though they will still have to pay a parking fine of 3,000 rubles (\$88), the newspaper reported, citing the city's Information Technology department.

When traffic police discover an illegally parked vehicle, its license plate will be checked against a database of those who have signed up for the service.

Last year City Hall created paid parking zones in the city center and began charging violators 3,000 to 7,000 rubles (\$87 to \$204) for towing their vehicles in addition to the parking fine

itself.

The Information Technology department told Kommersant that the city has 305 tow trucks that move between 500 and 600 vehicles a day, and that if violators moved their cars themselves, the city would save up to \$2.6 million per month.

In addition to the regular traffic police, in 2012 Moscow began using a system of cars with satellite positioning systems and dashboard cameras to roam the city and automatically record violators' license plate numbers without stopping, later sending fines to drivers.

An estimated 3.8 million people are already signed up for the city's unified alert system, which also sends SMS messages to subscribers about traffic fines they owe and about when hot water will be turned off in individual buildings, Kommersant reported.

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