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Authorities Warn of Chance of Smog From Forest Fires

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In the summer of 2010, record-high temperatures led to an outbreak of forest fires that sent so much smog into Moscow.

Residents in the Moscow region should brace themselves for smog from nearby forest fires, Russia's federal agency in charge of monitoring air quality said Friday.

The agency stopped short of predicting the arrival of smog, but warned that the region's soaring temperatures have increased the probability of nearby forest fires, which in turn adds to the chances of a repeat of the situation in 2010 that saw the city literally engulfed in smog.

"Next week, the wind pattern will change, the air will blow from the northeast and the east. If forest fires break out in the Vladimir or Nizhny Novgorod regions, there is a strong likelihood that the fumes will reach the eastern districts of the Moscow region within a day or two," Yury Varakin, head of the state weather service's emergency situations center, said in comments carried by Interfax.

The Moscow region was this week put on the highest level of fire risk.

In the summer of 2010, record-high temperatures led to an outbreak of forest fires that sent so much smog into Moscow that many residents fled the city.

The smoke from burning peatlands covered the city for several weeks, and authorities were forced to issue health warnings as the natural mortality rate doubled.

See also:

Summer Smog From Forest Fires Closes In on Moscow

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