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AvtoVAZ's Lada Kalina Design Deemed Hazard for Cats

By The Moscow Times

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AvtoVAZ engineers have already consulted with rescuers to make a cat-safe model, which is expected to go into production next spring, Komsomolskaya Pravda said.

Russia's supermini car brand, the Lada Kalina, may not be the most high-end vehicle out there, but at least it should soon stop being a hazard for heat-seeking cats.

AvtoVAZ, the model's manufacturer, is looking into tweaking the hood design of the Lada Kalina to prevent cats from getting inside, LadaKalina.ru reported.

The current design features openings in the engine compartment big enough for a determined feline to squeeze through.

Many cats take advantage of that in cold weather, getting inside parked cars to get warm — and then getting caught in the engine when the unsuspecting driver revs it up.

The alarm was raised by emergency services, which rescued seven cats in AvtoVAZ's home city

of Tolyatti in September alone, the Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper said last week.

One in five cats sustains serious injuries from snuggling up inside the Lada Kalina, an emergency service spokesman said.

But the incidents have caused considerable concern among the owners of the vehicle, which is marketed as a city car for women.

AvtoVAZ engineers have already consulted with rescuers to make a cat-safe model, which is expected to go into production next spring, Komsomolskaya Pravda said.

AvtoVAZ sold almost 68,000 Lada Kalinas in Russia last year, according to LadaKalina.ru. It remained unclear how many had proved harmful to cats.

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