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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia's Road Safety Watchdog Sees Increase in Drunk-Driving Accidents

By The Moscow Times

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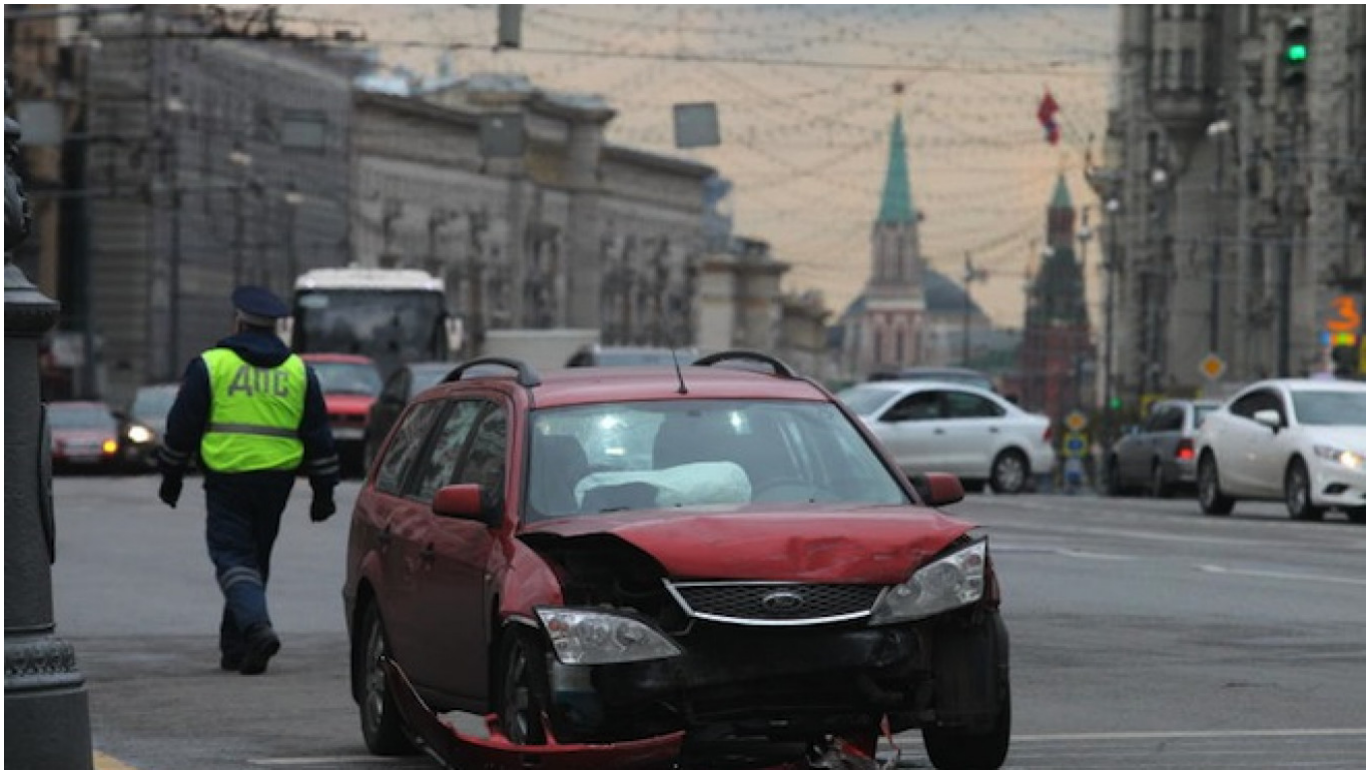

Drivers in Moscow and the Moscow region were found to be involved in the highest number of drunk-driving incidents.

The number of people killed or injured in accidents involving drunk drivers has increased by about 11.2 percent this year, according to Russia's road safety watchdog.

From January to November, 14,300 people were involved in drunk driving accidents that resulted in death or injury — up from about 12,600 last year, news site Gazeta.ru reported Friday, citing data from the Interior Ministry's road safety inspection unit.

Drivers in Moscow and the Moscow region were found to be involved in the highest number of drunk-driving incidents, along with drivers in St. Petersburg, and the Voronezh, Tula and Yaroslavl regions.

Accidents involving drunk drivers accounted for 9 percent of all 181,500 road accidents

recorded this year in Russia, though the total number of accidents decreased by 2.7 percent over the same period from last year, the report said.

The statistics were released Friday as lawmakers approved a second reading of a bill that would toughen punishment for intoxicated drivers involved in fatal accidents.

Under the amendments, a minimum two-year prison sentence would be introduced for drunk drivers found guilty of killing one person, and a minimum four-year sentence would be introduced for drivers found guilty of killing two or more people.

There is currently no minimum sentence for drink drivers found guilty of causing road deaths through their actions. The amendments are expected to come into effect on July 1, 2015, state-run RIA Novosti reported Friday.

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