Leak in Russian Oil Pipeline Causes Oil Spill In Black Sea

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Some quantity of oil has spilled into the Black Sea.

A leak on a major Russian oil pipeline caused a spill in the Black Sea near the port of Tuapse on Wednesday, where officials said stormy weather was hampering efforts to assess and respond to the mishap.

"Some quantity of oil has spilled into the sea," Sergei Proskurin, first deputy captain of the port of Tuapse, told Reuters.

He said the size of the spill was unclear and that emergencies services were working to deploy temporary floating barriers to contain the spill but were being delayed by the stormy conditions.

Tuapse is a busy industrial and oil port but is located close to many Russian Black Sea resorts. It is just 118 km from the city of Sochi, which hosted the 2014 Winter Olympics.

Two Tuapse residents told Reuters they had seen oil in the sea and in a river along which

the pipeline runs towards the Tuapse oil refinery operated by state oil firm Rosneft.

"I can see dark spots on the river ... The sea is stormy. I can't say it is fully covered in oil but there is plenty of oil in the port and on berths, not to mention the coastline," said a worker at the refinery who asked not to be named.

Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry confirmed the leak but declined to comment on the size of the spill. Russian pipeline monopoly Transneft was quoted by local media as saying the pipeline was shut after the leak.

Rosneft said work at the refinery was unaffected as it was drawing crude from its stocks.

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