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Foreign Detergent Producers Ask Russian Watchdog to Explain Claims

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The checks on foreign household chemicals became the latest incident in a series of inspections of goods produced by foreign manufacturers.

Foreign manufacturers of household chemicals that have been removed from sale by Russia's consumer rights watchdog have asked the agency to clarify its claims.

On Wednesday German manufacturer Werner & Mertz expressed confusion regarding the decision made by Russia's official consumer rights watchdog Rospotrebnadzor to withdraw from sale a number of detergents produced by the company, RIA Novosti news agency reported, citing Werner & Mertz's representative Birgitta Schenz.

Henkel and Procter & Gamble, which are among the companies that have seen their products disappear from Russian supermarket shelves, also seek an explanation for such measures.

Henkel asked Rospotrebnadzor to clarify the agency's claims Tuesday. The situation has

caused serious concern within the company, Natalya Ovakimian, head of corporate communications at Henkel Russia told RBC newspaper.

No official letter from the agency has been received by the company, she said.

On Tuesday Rospotrebnadzor reported violations of safety standards in a number of household chemicals produced by foreign manufacturers.

As a result of the checks, the agency ordered retailers to remove from sale certain detergents produced by Henkel Rus, Nevskaya Kosmetika, Procter & Gamble, Colgate-Palmolive, The Clorox Company, Werner & Mertz GmbH and ESP-Contract GmbH, the agency's statement said.

The watchdog said that batches of foreign detergents should be withdrawn from sale "in order to prevent damage to the life and health of citizens," Kommersant said, citing the letter sent by Rospotrebnadzor to retailers.

The agency also launched unscheduled inspections of Henkel's plant in Russia's Perm region, TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

On Wednesday, Rospotrebnadzor told retailers that seized household chemicals will be returned to suppliers, according to the agency's statement.

The agency said it does not intend to ban the import and sale of foreign detergents. The items will reappear in stores after all safety violations have been eliminated, Rospotrebnadzor's head Anna Popova told the Rossiya 24 state-run television channel, according to Interfax news agency.

The checks on foreign household chemicals became the latest incident in a series of inspections of goods produced by foreign manufacturers, carried out by Russian government agencies.

Some commentators believe such checks and removal from sale of foreign goods are connected with the sanctions imposed on Russia by the European Union and United States over its involvement in the Ukraine crisis.

Rospotrebnadzor said in statement on Tuesday that inspections of household chemicals and detergents produced by other manufacturers are being carried out now.

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