

8 Firefighters Killed in Moscow Warehouse Blaze

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Eight firefighters have been killed while tackling a warehouse blaze in east Moscow, the Emergency Situations Ministry (MCHS) has confirmed.

Initial reports suggested that 100 employees had been evacuated from the burning building, a warehouse for artificial flowers on Amurskaya Ulitsa, the TASS news agency reported. MCHS later confirmed that the building had been empty at the time of the fire.

Fire crews were initially called to the scene at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, but only managed to extinguish the blaze at 6:00 a.m. on Friday, said the deputy head of the MCHS, Oleg Bazhenov.

The eight firefighters had been working on the roof of the building, which then collapsed beneath them, said Bazhenov. Despite initial hopes that they had survived the fall, the intensity of the heat and smoke meant that the men were trapped inside the building.

A criminal case has been opened into possible fire safety violations, including the lack of a working sprinkler system, TASS reported.

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