

Power Restored to Russian Dormitory After Desperate Rooftop 'SOS' Addressed to Putin

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Sergei Ivanov / YouTube

It's October and it's already quite chilly in Irkutsk, where the temperatures dipped several degrees below freezing before dawn this Monday. When the sun came up, it illuminated a message freshly painted on the roof of an old dormitory for a former military engineering academy. The message read, "SOS, Putin, help!" The power had been cut off, and it looked like the heating would go next.

Hours later, on orders from the deputy minister of defense, the electricity was restored.

Embed:

В Иркутске замерзающие жители военного городка написали на крыше

своего дома «SOS, Путин, помоги» <https://t.co/ulyNb6r8iw>
[pic.twitter.com/yNGp9stEjL](https://t.co/ulyNb6r8iw)

— FlashSiberia (@FlashSiberia) [October 3, 2016](#)

A supervisor for Oboronservis, a holding company under the Defense Ministry's control, told the RIA Novosti agency that officials suddenly reversed an earlier decision to cut off the dormitory's power because of unpaid utility bills.

“First we got the order from our parent company in Chita to disconnect them from the electrical grid, and now they’ve told us there’s an order from the deputy minister to give them electricity again. So we’re reconnecting them now,” the Oboronservis official said.

The dormitory in question is part of a military academy that closed down in 2009, when most cadets and their families were relocated to Voronezh.

The building is situated on land that was owned by the Defense Ministry until last year, when it was transferred to the Irkutsk regional government. The dormitory, which has been condemned by inspectors, isn’t technically owned by anyone at the moment. Several families still reside inside. On several occasions, utilities providers have shut off the power, water, and heating, only to restore it later.

Creative public appeals to Vladimir Putin are not exactly rare in Russia. Last week, bus drivers in the Belgorod region arranged their vehicles to spell “Putin, help!” in a parking lot, asking the president to investigate a decision by a local mayor to cancel contracts with several transportation companies.

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