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Moscow's Snow Cleanup Has Some Flaws, But Its GPS Stats Are Stellar

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This weekend, a city councilman in Moscow's Severnoye Izmaylovo District noticed a couple of tractors driving through a local courtyard. They were supposed to be cleaning up snow, but they were just driving around, cleaning up nothing. The man then stopped the lead tractor and asked what was going on.

They say they were acting on orders from their boss, circling the area in tractors without the proper brushes attached to their vehicles, making it impossible to clean up any snow.

The city councilman filmed the exchange, and his YouTube video quickly led to a scandal in Moscow's communal services.

In the video, a tractor driver said that his team wasn't equipped with the necessary brushes for cleaning up snow, but his boss ordered them into the streets nonetheless, in order to fool the fleet's GPS system into registering the cleanup work as completed.

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After media outlets reported the scandal, the government institution responsible for Moscow's snow cleanup, Zhilishchnik, told the tabloid Life that the tractor drivers caught on video have already been fired for failing to do their jobs.

"We are aware of the situation in question," a company representative told Life. "These men were new employees, and they still hadn't passed their initial probationary period. We fire people who don't want to fulfill their work duties. It's our policy to prohibit vehicles from going into the field with brushes raised out of service, let alone without any brushes at all."

Responding to concerns that Zhilishchnik is battling a shortage of the brushes needed to plow Moscow's streets, a spokesperson for the company assured Life that there are plenty of snow brushes in stock currently.

"The brushes are washed occasionally, especially when there's a lot of snow. When this happens, the tractors are outfitted with new brushes immediately," the spokesperson told Life.

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