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Russia Extends Restrictions on Sale of Alcohol Products After Mass Poisoning

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Maxim Stulov / Vedomosti

Russian consumer watchdog Rospotrebnadzor has extended its ban on the sale on alcohol-based non-food products for a further 60 days.

The ban affects all non-food products with an alcohol content of more than 25 percent, excluding perfume and window cleaners.

Russian Prime Dmitry Minister Medvedev first brought in the restrictions on Dec. 26 2016 after almost 80 died of alcohol poisoning in the Siberian city of Irkurtsk. The victims had drunk a bath lotion often used as a low-priced "substitute vodka" for its high percentage of ethyl alcohol. The product which the victims had consumed was found instead to contain poisonous methyl alcohol.

Rospotrebnadzor claims that the restrictions implemented reduced poisoning-related deaths due to poisoning by 65 percent over the January holidays.

In a report released on Tuesday, Rospotrebnadzor announced that it had studied more than 10,700 samples of domestically-produced alcoholic drinks in 2016, of which just 3.9 percent did not meet the requirements. A further 1,500 samples were taken from imported drinks, of which 5 percent did not meet legal standards.

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