

Utility Company Reportedly Shuts Off Heating and Hot Water to Yeltsin Presidential Center

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AP Photo / Misha Japaridze

In November 2015, the Boris Yeltsin Presidential Center opened in Yekaterinburg. President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, and Yeltsin's widow, Naina, all attended the ceremony.

The center, which features a museum dedicated to Russia's first president, has been controversial from the start, and many Russians — notably the filmmaker Nikita Mikhalkov — have criticized it for distorting the history of the 1990s, which contemporary Russians generally view as a “time of troubles.”

This Tuesday, the local utility company announced that it has shut off the museum's heating and hot water, accusing Klaas-Stroi, which owns the Yeltsin Center, of failing to pay its bills.

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According to the Sverdlovsk branch of Energosbyt Plus, Klaas-Stroi owes 3.3 million rubles (almost \$56,000) in utility bills since this January.

“We can’t say for sure which accrued the debt, the cultural center or the business center, and so we capped the supply to both of Klaas-Stroi’s organizations,” a spokesperson for Energosbyt Plus told the news agency Interfax.

According to Interfax, Klaas-Stroi has already paid 2 million rubles (about \$34,000) of its debt, but the utility company insists that services won’t resume until the full debt is paid.

Meanwhile, the press office for the Yeltsin Center told Interfax that the museum hasn’t noticed any loss of heating or hot water.

“The Yeltsin Center works with Energosbyt through a contractor,” press secretary Elena Volkova said. “Currently, we have no debts, so the center is operating normally, and we’ve also experienced no problems with heating or hot water.”

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