

Victims of Siberia Mall Fire Waited for Rescuers Who Never Arrived, Grieving Father Says

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Emergency Situations Ministry / TASS

A man who lost his wife, sister and three children in the tragic shopping mall fire in Siberia has said that his family had remained in the mall's cinema after the blaze started, waiting for rescuers that never arrived.

Official reports say that 64 people, including 41 children, were killed in flames that tore through the Winter Cherry mall in the city of Kemerovo on Sunday. Investigators have not confirmed the cause of the fire, but the high death toll has been blamed on reported shortcomings in the mall's safety procedures.

Related article: [Russia Buries Victims of Mall Blaze as Flags Fly at Half Mast](#)

Igor Vostrikov, the father of three who gained nationwide attention after a local official [accused](#) him of “self-promotion,” said on social media that he was shown security footage that reveals that the doors of the mall’s cinema were not locked when the fire broke out at the top floor.

“Everyone was running out and only our kids were left because there was a children’s cartoon [...] By the time they got to the exit, there was the thickest, most impenetrable smoke,” Vostrikov said in a recorded video [published](#) on Thursday.

“A man decided to close the door, stuff the gaps and wait for rescuers. But the rescuers never arrived,” Vostrikov, fighting back tears, said in the video.

The father accused firefighters of failing to put out the flames on the roof of the Winter Cherry until an hour and a half after the fire started.

Kemerovo residents Igor Sabadash and Nadezhda Vostrikova, who lost five close relatives in the fire, complained to the Prosecutor General’s Office about the failures of rescuers and firefighters to save the victims, the RBC business portal [reported](#) on Wednesday.

Vostrikova recounted that mall employees blocked her way into the cinema while four firefighters told her “we can’t help you in any way, we’re waiting for a team of rescuers,” according to RBC’s transcription of the complaint.

“Every minute, I screamed at every man, firefighter who was there: ‘Save my children, there are five of them, aged 2, 5, 7, 23, 30.’ I repeated these words every five minutes to each firefighter,” Vostrikova was cited as writing.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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