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Russian World-Cup Themed Water Bottle Ignites Objects, Media Reports

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fontanka.ru

As Russian companies try to cash in on football-themed products ahead of the 2018 World Cup in Russia, one popular water brand is literally trying to catch fire.

Just about everyone is trying to capitalize on the tournament kicking off in 11 Russian cities two weeks from now, luring fans with customized souvenirs including sausages and Matryoshka dolls salaciously blowing the referee's whistle.

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Bottled mineral water maker Svyatoi Istochnik is no exception, coming out with a new football-shaped commemorative bottle that was quickly discovered to have a potentially deadly design flaw.

Leave the plastic bottle in the sun long enough, it turns out, and its unusual shape will redirect the sun's heat like a magnifying glass use by kids to burn ants.

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"What a miracle: it takes a piece of paper less than a minute to burn, a bit more and a matchbox catches fire," St. Petersburg's Fontanka.ru news website said in a video testing the bottle on Thursday.

Scientists explain that it is natural for a spherical-shaped bottle to concentrate heat, with St. Petersburg State University physics professor Viktor Karasev telling Fontanka.ru that "a spherical lens is ideal" for starting fires.

Svyatoi Istochnik's bottler, the famous IDS Borjomi Georgian brand, has stood by its product. A IDS Borjomi spokeswoman maintained that the bottle's label bears the standard disclaimers telling customers to store the bottles at room temperatures and away from direct sunlight.

Russian laws regulates packaging materials but not the shapes they come in, according to Lev Kasimov, a manager at the PET Industry SPb plastic container manufacturer.

"The shapes can be very different. It's just that ball-shaped bottles are rare because they're inconvenient to transport and take up a lot of space," Fontanka.ru quoted him as saying.

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