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Russia Issued $1M in Fines for Breaking Smoking Laws

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Anti-smoking sign/ Sergei Vedyashkin/ Moskva News Agency

Russia has issued fines of $1 million this year against 5,000 smokers and tobacco stores for violating anti-smoking laws.

Russia, the United States, China and India accounted for a majority of the world's 6.4 million deaths attributed to smoking, according to the British medical journal The Lancet. A series of laws from 2013 set fines of up to 3,000 rubles ($45) for smoking in public spaces, including at airports and near metro stations.

Russia's consumer protection watchdog said it fined more than 5,100 tobacco users, salespeople and retailers a total of 70 million rubles ($1 million) in the first six months of 2018 for breaching anti-smoking laws.

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Since the first round of anti-smoking laws took effect in 2013, the Federal Consumer Protection Service said it has issued 70,000 fines.

Meanwhile, health officials have warned that electronic cigarettes serve as a gateway to smoking.

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