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Russian Judge Clears Cat of Responsibility for Electric Bill Debt

October 02, 2018



Vladislav Shatilo / TASS

A court in the Siberian city of Barnaul has cleared a cat of wrongdoing after its owners accused it of running up their electric bill.

"As part of the court case, the private homeowners explained that their cat likes to walk in the attic," in dangerous proximity to an electric meter that they eventually decided to move, the BGES utility company said in a statement.

"However, they said they were too late. The cat ended up ripping the seal from the meter during his latest raid of the rooftop," the company cited the homeowners as saying.

Local media identified the feline debtor as Vasya, a diminutive of the Russian name Vasily.

Local wireman Sergei Platonyuk came to Vasya's defense in court, saying: "the seal would have remained intact even if the cat hung onto it with its claw."

The Barnaul judge sided with the utility company and absolved the cat, informing the homeowners that they are responsible for the seal's safety by law.

BGES said the debtors did not appeal the ruling to pay off 80,500 rubles ($1,200) in outstanding debt and legal fees.

Meanwhile, last week, a beaver reportedly left hundreds of residents in the Altai region without electricity after gnawing a tree that fell onto a transmission line.

Related article: Hungry Siberian Beaver Leaves Hundreds of Locals Without Electricity

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