

Abramovich-Built Stadium in Russia Slated for Demolition Over Safety Concerns

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Ivan Krylov / Wikicommons

An ice hockey stadium built in Siberia by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich for an estimated \$150 million will now be demolished over safety concerns, 12 years after it was first opened to the public.

First inaugurated in 2007 in the Siberian city of Omsk, the arena was donated by Abramovich to the local Avangard Hockey Club in 2012. Last September, an evaluation of Omsk Arena's structure [determined](#) the building was in "emergency condition," with specialists finding structural defects in 90 percent of surveyed areas, including large cracks in its columns.

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“It’s clear that what’s here now will be demolished,” Avangard’s chairman Alexander Krylov [told](#) journalists Thursday.

“A modern arena will be built on this site,” he added.

Avangard was forced to [relocate](#) three time zones away from its hometown to a stadium near Moscow after structural defects were discovered at Omsk Arena last summer. The club did not reveal the extent and nature of the damage but hinted the decision to move was linked to safety.

With the new facility still in the design stage, reports [suggest](#) the team is unlikely to return to Omsk before 2021.

Avangard, which was founded in 1950 and has played in the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL) since its inception in 2008, has been trying to bridge the geographic gap with its fans and assuage their discontent over the relocation.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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