

Chechen Court Overturns \$140M Gas Debt Write-Off

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

A Chechen court has overturned an earlier ruling ordering Russian gas giant Gazprom to write off 9 billion rubles (\$140 million) of the region's gas debt.

Unpaid debts on utility bills are a widespread problem in Chechnya's capital of Grozny, where local media [reported](#) extensive raids and mass blackouts over unpaid bills by as many as 35 percent of residents. The North Caucasus republic's district court [said](#) in January that Chechen customers' debt owed to a Gazprom subsidiary was "unrecoverable."

Related article: [Fearing Protests, Court Orders Gazprom to Write Off Chechnya's \\$135M Gas Debt](#)

Chechnya's Supreme Court reversed the district court's ruling on Thursday, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#).

Gazprom estimated that as of Jan. 1, 2018, Chechen gas consumers had owed 14.4 billion rubles. Nationwide accumulated debt [totaled](#) 30.1 billion rubles as of Jan. 1, 2019, Gazprom's subsidiary Gazprom Mezhsregiongaz said.

The January judgment had prompted other regions to [submit](#) similar requests that their debts be repealed, posing a dilemma for President Vladimir Putin whether to side with Gazprom or Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

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