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Greenpeace Finds High Radiation Along Planned Moscow Highway Route

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Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency

Soil samples taken along the route of a planned highway in Moscow are emitting radiation levels that pose cancer risks to residents, Greenpeace Russia said Monday.

Activists have warned that the eight-lane highway, which authorities hope to start building next year and finish by 2024, will release buried radioactive dust into the air and the Moscow River.

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"We now have official proof that radioactive waste lies on the route and not somewhere nearby," Greenpeace Russia said Monday.

Greenpeace demanded in July that construction be halted, months after state-run safety tests

revealed radiation levels near the planned highway 200 times higher than the norm.

The NGO and hired experts found five locations on the highway route between the Moscow Polymetals Plant and the Moskvorechye commuter rail station where topsoil emitted up to eight times the normal level of radiation.

“Borehole measurements half a meter deep showed greater [radiation] values than on the surface,” Greenpeace said.

Rashid Alimov, the director of Greenpeace's energy program, said radioactive dust increases the likelihood of cancer.

“The biggest danger is posed by dust breathed into the human body,” Alimov told The Moscow Times.

Moscow City Hall’s construction department told the RBC news website Friday that background radiation does not exceed the normal range at the highway construction zone.

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