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U.S. Trashes Faulty Russian Ventilators From Virus Aid Package – Reports

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The U.S. reportedly never used the 45 Aventa-M ventilators shipped from Russia this spring. **Ronald Wittek / EPA / TASS**

The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has thrown out ventilators shipped from Russia this spring as part of a coronavirus aid exchange, BuzzFeed News reported Monday.

FEMA said in May that it had mothballed the 45 Aventa-M ventilators after they were blamed for two fires that killed seven coronavirus patients in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The agency said it placed the ventilators in storage pending the results of Russia's investigation into the deadly fires.

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"The donated ventilators in question were disposed of following strict hazardous waste disposal regulatory guidelines," BuzzFeed News quoted FEMA as saying Monday.

The agency did not say when exactly the Russian-made ventilators were discarded, but BuzzFeed News reported that they were never used.

Russia's healthcare regulator suspended the use of Aventa-M following the deadly fires, but then reauthorized it in July after ruling that the ventilators had not caused the deadly hospital fires.

Still, a Russian court last month fined the ventilator's manufacturer, the Ural Instrument Engineering Plant (UPZ), $1,300 for breaching licensing requirements that the healthcare regulator uncovered.

UPZ is a subsidiary of the Russian state-owned Rostec technology and defense conglomerate that is under U.S. sanctions, which raised questions about the legality of the April 1 ventilator shipment.

Rostec was reported to have delivered around 9,000 Aventa-M ventilators to Russian clinics so far this year. It is expected to deliver another 3,000 Aventa-M ventilators by the end of 2020.

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