

NYE Fireworks Spark South Russia Wildfires

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Firefighters have been battling the flames since New Year's Day. **Krasnodar region branch of Russia's Emergencies Ministry / Instagram**

Emergency crews in southern Russia are battling wildfires sparked by New Year's Eve fireworks, authorities have said.

Russia's Aerial Forest Protection Service [said](#) the flames had spread across 129 hectares at three locations in the Krasnodar region, including the Sochi National Park, as of early Monday.

Governor Venyamin Kondratyev [said](#) Saturday that the fires in the popular domestic tourist destination were ignited by fireworks.

"Firefighters have been fighting the flames since the first days of the New Year," Kondratyev wrote on social media. "The forest floor near Sochi caught fire during the discharge of fireworks. Fires occurred in Krasnodar and Gelendzhik for the same reason."

He said the flames did not threaten nearby residents. It was unclear whether the wildfires had prompted evacuations.

The Aerial Forest Protection Service said that firefighters had put out 10 wildfires across almost 50 hectares between New Year's Day Friday and Sunday.

Russia's Forestry Agency [ordered](#) emergency crews to step up patrols and inform residents and tourists about fire safety compliance to prevent the outbreak of further wildfires.

On Monday, media [reported](#) that police in the resort city of Sochi had also linked local homeowners to the wildfires. One of them was said to be detained for burning grass on his property.

Video shared by the Podyom news website showed the alleged perpetrator tossing flammable liquid from a bucket onto dry vegetation.

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