

Russia Probes Oil Spill in Gulf of Finland

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News of the spill comes hours after President Vladimir Putin called for stronger action against polluters in his annual speech. **Screenshot Investigative Committee**

Russian investigators on Wednesday [said](#) they are inspecting an oil spill in the Gulf of Finland near the city of Vyborg in the Leningrad region, hours after President Vladimir Putin called for stronger action against polluters.

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The Investigative Committee's northwestern transport investigation department said it dispatched a team of its investigators and specialists from environmental watchdog Rosprirodnadzor to the scene of the spill near the Tovarnaya-Vyborg railway station.

After the team inspected the site and collected water samples, "the body of water's pollution was established," the statement said.

Investigators said the inspection is taking place under a criminal article against violation of rules for the transport of environmentally hazardous substances and waste.

In his annual state-of-the-nation speech earlier Wednesday, Putin [proposed](#) allocating state budget funds toward environmental recovery and called for stronger restrictions on pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

“We cannot allow climate catastrophes like the one in Norilsk,” Putin said in his annual state-of-the-nation speech Wednesday, referring to the May 2020 [diesel fuel spill](#) that was branded the worst-ever environmental disaster in the Arctic.

“If you make a profit from nature, clean up after yourself,” he said.

The latest spill comes less than two weeks after a spill of about three tons of oil at the same train station. [Local media reported](#) that fuel had spilled onto the railway tracks as it was being transferred from a tank car to the station’s boiler depot.

The Gulf of Finland is surrounded by Russia, Finland and Estonia and runs into the Baltic Sea.

In addition to the spill near Norilsk, Russia has been beset by a number of environmental disasters in recent years including increasingly severe wildfires in Siberia and a mass die-off of marine life off the Kamchatka peninsula.

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