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Crimea Gas Pipeline Fire Leaves 30K Residents Without Heating

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The site of Friday's gas pipeline fire. **Kerch Info**

Around 30,000 residents of annexed Crimea face power outages after a gas pipeline caught fire overnight, Russian state media reported Friday.

Eyewitnesses filmed the flames erupting from the gas pipeline in the eastern port city of Kerch, which connects to mainland Russia via the Crimean Bridge.

Svyatoslav Brusakov, the Russian-installed mayor of Kerch, said up to 30,000 residents of the city — which has a population of 150,000 — experienced heating shortages as a result of the incident.

An anonymous official told Russia's state-run news agency RIA Novosti that fire crews had extinguished the flames by early Friday morning.

Hours after the fire, Crimea's gas provider Krymgazseti said 14,000 apartments and 4,000 households remained without heating amid ongoing repair work.

Authorities have not named the possible cause of the blaze.

Moscow annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014, eight years before launching its full-scale military invasion of that country.

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