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Chemical Plant Explosion in Southern Russia Injures 9

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Smoke billowing from the Shakhtinsky Polyester Plant in the town of Shakhty. **Social media**

Nine people were injured in an explosion and fire at a chemical plant in southern Russia's Rostov region, authorities said Wednesday, less than a year after the plant's opening.

Security camera footage captured the moment when a huge explosion ripped through the Shakhtinsky Polyester Plant in the town of Shakhty.

Five people were hospitalized with various injuries, three others with burn wounds and one person was treated without hospitalization, Rostov region Governor Vasily Golubev said.

He said the blaze had been contained more than an hour after emergency crews were notified.

Embed:

Golubev denied rumors on social media that the plant explosion occurred as a result of a drone strike.

The Rostov region borders eastern Ukraine's Luhansk and Donetsk regions, which are partially occupied by Russian troops.

Pro-Kremlin news website Gazeta.ru published an interview with a person identified as one of the plant's workers who claimed the explosion was caused by unsafe handling of equipment.

"The locksmiths were trying to fix a faucet that was dripping with acid," he was quoted as saying. "They tried to fix it by chiseling on the nut. They made a very strong blow, the bolt cracked."

"The valve came out and the acid poured on the solution. First, there was a small fire, then there was gas," the worker told Gazeta.ru, adding that workers began evacuating the facility as the spill grew stronger.

The Shakhtinsky Polyester Plant opened in June.

Golubev has referred to the factory as an "import-substitution enterprise" designed to replace Western companies that exited Russia over the invasion of Ukraine.

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