

Russians Dump Green Dye Into Ballot Boxes in At Least 7 Regions

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Russian election and law enforcement authorities have reported a spate of incidents involving voters spilling green antiseptic dye into ballot boxes on the first day of the presidential election.

The dye, called *zelyonka* in Russian, was widely used in attacks on opposition activists figures during the 2010s.

Russia's Central Election Commission (CEC) [called](#) for security upgrades after dye-spilling incidents occurred in southern Russia's Rostov region and the republic of Karachayevo-Cherkessia.

CEC chief Ella Pamfilova [claimed](#) those arrested in the dye-spilling incidents said they had been promised money and were unaware of criminal punishment for the actions.

Investigators in the Rostov region later [announced](#) a criminal case against a 62-year-old man

on charges of obstruction of voting rights, which carry a maximum sentence of five years in prison.

Embed:

Two ballot boxes were similarly [damaged](#) in the town of Borisoglebsk in southern Russia's Voronezh region, according to local media.

Authorities there [said](#) they would determine whether to count the spoiled ballots after voting ends on Sunday.

Meanwhile, investigators in Moscow [said](#) they had detained a local woman on suspicion of a similar incident.

Footage [shared](#) by the independent news outlet Sota showed the woman spilling green dye into the ballot box after casting her vote.

The 20-year-old also [faces](#) up to five years in prison on charges of obstruction of voting rights.

A sixth ballot box was [damaged](#) with green dye by an elderly woman in annexed Crimea, according to media with links to Russia's security forces. A seventh incident was later [reported](#) in the Volgograd region.

President Vladimir Putin is expected to clinch re-election to a fifth term in the March 15-17 vote with all real opposition barred from the ballot.

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