

More Evacuations in Russia's Urals, Western Siberia as Water Levels Rise

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Flood waters in the Kurgan region. **Donat Sorokin / TASS**

Authorities in Russia's Kurgan and Tyumen regions have urged residents to flee as the nearby Tobol and Ishim rivers swelled to dangerous levels.

Officials previously forecast that the Ishim and Tobol rivers would reach peak levels around April 23-25. But the Kremlin said flood water levels were now expected to increase in the Kurgan and Tyumen regions by mid-week as the rivers [approached](#) or [exceeded](#) eight meters on Tuesday.

"Dear residents of the region, if you live in the flood zone, evacuate immediately," the Kurgan regional government [said](#) in a statement posted on the Russian social network Vkontakte.

Kurgan region Governor Vadim Shumkov [warned](#) Monday that a "colossal" amount of river water was rapidly flowing toward the regional capital, which has a population of over 300,000 people.

“This isn’t just a flood, it’s a real threat,” Shumkov said. “Take your children, the elderly, handicapped relatives and neighbors to temporary shelters or to friends and acquaintances. Collect personal documents and valuables. Evacuate or bring your belongings to the top floors and leave your homes and *dachas* immediately.”

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In the neighboring Tyumen region, Governor Alexander Moor told Russian state television that eight villages were evacuated due to the rising Tobol River and warned the Ishim River was “rising very dynamically.”

He said that water levels in the river were expected to reach “historic maximum,” adding that authorities were considering whether to implement mandatory evacuations.

In a video released late Sunday, Moor warned the river will “flow intensely” as its ice cover melts, threatening the city of Ishim, which has a population of some 65,000 people. The Tyumen regional government [said](#) Tuesday that emergency alerts had been sent to residents via text message urging them to flee the city.

Since early April, Russia and neighboring Kazakhstan have been battling devastating floods that have forced the evacuation of tens of thousands of people. Scores of cities and towns were completely or partially flooded last week in the southern Orenburg region as the Ural River swelled.

Spring flooding caused by melting ice is a regular occurrence in some parts of Russia, but this year’s heavy rainfall, combined with unusually warm spring weather, has led to severe flooding in Russia’s Urals and western Siberia.

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