

# 19 Killed in Bootleg Alcohol Poisoning in Russia's Leningrad Region

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**Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

At least 19 people have died this month after consuming bootleg alcohol in northwestern Russia's Leningrad region near the border with Estonia, authorities said Friday.

National police spokeswoman Irina Volk [said](#) two local residents were detained on suspicion of supplying raw alcohol and using it to produce homemade spirits.

"A resident of the village of Gostitsy is suspected of selling alcohol-containing liquid to fellow villagers," Volk [wrote](#) of the first detainee on Telegram.

"A little later, his acquaintance from a neighboring village, who had allegedly sold raw alcohol to the pensioner, was detained," she [added](#).

The Leningrad region's administration [said](#) at least 19 deaths have been registered across the southwestern Slantsevsky district in September.

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Eight of the deaths have been confirmed as methanol poisoning, it added.

Media reports claimed investigators were examining whether industrial alcohol was used in the fatal poisonings.

Authorities have [opened](#) a criminal case of death by negligence, according to the regional prosecutor's office.

It said a court is expected to rule on placing those arrested into pre-trial detention.

Local media outlet 47news [reported](#), citing anonymous sources, that one of the spirit producers was a 79-year-old who had been fined in 2019 for selling diluted alcohol at cut-rate prices.

State-run news outlets [claimed](#) the person suspected of supplying raw alcohol for production was a 60-year-old kindergarten worker.

Russia has faced repeated waves of deadly surrogate alcohol poisonings, often involving methanol-laced or industrial-grade spirits.

Such incidents are typically driven by poverty, limited access to legal alcohol, and the persistence of underground suppliers in rural areas.

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