

Snow Storm Paralyzes Kamchatka

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Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. kamtoday.ru

A major winter storm hit Far East Russia's Kamchatka peninsula overnight on Tuesday, burying entire neighborhoods, triggering urban avalanches and forcing officials to deploy their vehicle fleet as a makeshift taxi service in the regional capital.

The city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky and the town of Vilyuchinsk on the southeastern tip of the peninsula were [hit](#) hardest, with 39 millimeters (1.5 inches) of precipitation recorded in less than 24 hours, according to the Emergency Situations Ministry.

The major Pacific cyclone brought life to a standstill in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, with public transit suspended and residents [reporting](#) being "completely buried" by snow drifts up to the second floor.

The mayor's office announced [school closures](#) through the end of the week, effectively extending children's New Year holidays.

With standard buses [unable](#) to navigate the drifts, the administration [deployed](#) several high-clearance off-road trucks to ferry residents along main city arteries.

Governor Vladimir Solodov [said](#) authorities had managed to maintain heating and electricity in most areas despite pressure on the grid.

State-run news agencies [reported](#) that hurricane-force winds knocked out several apartment building windows, damaged parked vehicles and blew the entire roof off of a private home.

There were no reports of injuries or deaths.

In one case, the extreme snow depth forced paramedics to [carry](#) a patient for nearly 1,000 yards to reach a waiting ambulance, according to the news outlet Govorit Nemoskva.

Forecasters [expect](#) a second cyclone to hit the shores of Kamchatka as soon as Wednesday evening.

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