The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Wildfire Smoke Engulfs Siberian Towns

June 15, 2026



Smoke in the town of Lesosibirsk. **max.ru/kolesolsib**

A blanket of wildfire smoke has engulfed towns across Siberia's Krasnoyarsk region following a region-wide emergency declaration, with officials warning Monday that the territory now accounts for nearly half of all wildfires in Russia.

"Heavy smoke has spread across all settlements in the district due to a large number of active fires," Yevgeny Petrenko, head of the northern Yeniseysky district in the Krasnoyarsk region, said Sunday.

While officials have said they do not expect flames to reach populated areas, local media published images of a thick layer of smoke suffocating the towns of Lesosibirsk and Yeniseysk, which have a combined population of around 80,000 people.

In one widely shared video, a man was seen walking his dog while wearing a gas mask.

"It's getting harder and harder to breathe inside our own apartments," a local Telegram channel reporting on the emergency in Lesosibirsk wrote. IQAir, an air quality tracking company, shows that the air quality level in the area is "unhealthy."

Related article: Russia Joins U.S. and Iran in Voting Against UN Climate Change Resolution

More than 50 wildfires are active across nine municipal districts in the Krasnoyarsk region. Authorities have blamed the fires on summer heat and Siberian silk moth infestations, which have killed off vast swathes of trees and left behind highly flammable deadwood.

Russia's Aerial Forest Protection Service said Monday that it was deploying controlled explosives to blast firebreaks in an effort to contain three large blazes in northwestern Krasnoyarsk.

"The situation in these remote, hard-to-reach areas has been heavily aggravated by recent lightning storms, combined with unseasonably warm and dry weather," the federal agency said.

NASA satellite imagery shows several fire hotspots in the area around Lesosibirsk and Yeniseysk, with plumes of smoke visible from space.

More than 1,300 personnel, 50 pieces of heavy ground equipment and 30 aircraft have been deployed to fight the fires across the region.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/06/15/wildfire-smoke-engulfs-siberian-towns-a93016