

# The St. Petersburg Times

Issue #1307 (73)  
Tuesday, September 18, 2007

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Business

## Norilsk Faces Fine Over Waste

Bloomberg

MOSCOW — Norilsk Nickel “distorted” figures on the amount of waste it dumped into rivers at its main site and may be fined, the Natural Resources Ministry said in a statement Thursday.

The company breached by as much as 2,400 times the permitted level of discharge for metals and chemicals such as iron, nickel, phosphate and chloride, and failed to meet deadlines to cut pollution, the ministry said in a statement.

“It’s absolutely clear; the figures on the documents they submitted and those that our tests show differ,” ministry spokesman Nikolai Gudkov said. The data used in initial checks have been “distorted,” he said.

Norilsk Nickel said it had sent “reasoned objections” on the results of the investigation to the Krasnoyarsk region’s branch of the environmental inspectorate. The company said in a statement Thursday that it expected them to be taken into account as part of an environmental review.

Inspectors concluded after more than a month of tests that Norilsk had failed to meet targets to cut water pollution, said Oleg Mitvol, deputy head of the Federal Service for the Inspection of Natural Resources Use.

“We’re talking about fines and compensation for impact on the environment,” Mitvol said. Iron levels in the Shchuchya River, near Norilsk, exceeded accepted levels by 220 times, nickel by 630 times, and copper by 2,400 times, when tested Aug. 15, Mitvol said.

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