

## **Ecodefense**

PRESS-RELEASE

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### **DANGEROUS CENSORSHIP: RUSSIAN AUTHORITIES REMOVED INFORMATION ON FOREST FIRE IN RADIOACTIVELY CONTAMINATED REGIONS FROM WEB-SITE**

Removing of important information helps officials to escape from responsibilities, but can not help to improve situation with forest fire.

On Friday afternoon head of Russian Emergency Ministry Sergey Shoigu publicly demanded to stop the rumors about radiation danger as a result of forest fires in the region of Bryansk. Immediately after this statement, Russian governmental organization "Roslesozaschita", responsible for protecting forests, removed from its web-site the information about forest fire in radioactively contaminated zones in the west of Russia.

On August 6, "Roslesozaschita" officially announced that since June it registered 507 forest fires in the regions partly contaminated with radiation. Moreover, governmental organization strongly recommended to authorities to inform local population about radiation danger. Also, "Roslesozaschita" published the list of radioactively contaminated forests on fire:

Bryansk region - 28 fires on the territory of 2,69 sq. km; Kaluga region - 11 fires, 1,73 sq.km; Chelyabinsk region - 401 fires, 14,3 sq.km; Kurgan region - 12 fires, 0,63 sq. km; Tula region - 6 fires, 0,44 sq.km; Oryol region - 3 fires, 0,13 sq.km; Penza region - 34 fires, 0,82 sq.km.

(Here you can download the copy of original document which was removed from governmental web-site on Friday:

<http://anti-atom.ru/downloads/rcfh-060810.jpg>)

Instead of informing Russian citizens about how many radiation laboratories working in radioactively contaminated regions, where it's located and what data it sends, the Emergency Ministry puts stronger censorship on information about radiation distribution. This indicates that Ministry doesn't control situation. When Chernobyl exploded in 1986, Soviet government censored information on accident and its radioactive danger and this is why many citizens later suffered from radiation exposure. Now Russian authorities are repeating this mistake again.

"Emergency Ministry and "Rosalesozaschita" are acting against Russian Constitution when removing information on fires in radioactively contaminated zones from public use. This very well known that many fires there already happened and that radiation could be re-distributed into new areas. Instead of censorship, authorities must fully inform Russian citizens and other countries about radioactive danger in Chelyabinsk, Bryansk and other regions. If it's truth that there are radiation measuring laboratories located in

contaminated regions, their information must be available to taxpayers who sponsors those laboratories and all governmental organizations", said Vladimir Sliviyak, co-chairman for Ecodefense, Russian environmental group.

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