

Police Show Up for Joke Rally

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Rostislav Zhuravlev greeting officers assigned to keep order at a "joke" rally sanctioned by the Yekaterinburg city administration. <!-- @page { margin: 0.79in } P { margin-bottom: 0.08in } -->

A Yekaterinburg man was surprised when police actually showed up for a rally he applied for as a joke, with 10 police officers escorting him along the route as the event's lone participant.

"Dear friends, the law on rallies works wonderfully," Rostislav Zhuravlev declares to the camera in a video posted to YouTube.

Zhuravlev posted his application for the event, which asks city approval for five people to hold a "mass presence and movement" along city streets "with the goal of sightseeing," to his

LiveJournal blog.

Zhuravlev said he had even forgotten about the request and thought friends were joking when he received an 8 a.m. call from police asking whether the rally would still be held. But "nonetheless 10 police officers and counter-extremism agents accompanied me on my lonely stroll," he wrote.

Rather than let the event go on to "complete absurdity," Zhuravlev told officers that he would allow them to get back to their duties and officially ended the event.

Meanwhile, activists in Nizhny Novgorod have overwhelmed the city administration with requests for absurd rallies with their Life According to the Law project. During the week-old campaign, activists have submitted applications for "going to the store for bread," "finding a man," "walking the dog" and other absurd activities.

Project creator Andrei Rudnoi wrote on LiveJournal that officials admitted they would not be able to answer all the requests within the required three days. According to Rudnoi, unanswered applications can be treated as if they received approval.

"Bravo Petyanin!" he wrote, referring to the city official in charge of liaising with law enforcement for rallies. "Thanks to you, between June 30 and July 3 there will be 48 protest events in Nizhny Novgorod!"

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