

Excise Stamp Row Risks Illegal Alcohol Influx

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The amount of illegal alcohol on the domestic market could increase if regulators bow to producers' demands to extend the validity of old-style excise duty stamps until September 2015, alcohol market experts said.

Since the new stamps were introduced in 2012, domestic retailers have increasingly refused to stock alcohol carrying the old-style stamps that expire at the end of the year. This trend has prompted the market's main players ask the authorities to push the deadline back in an effort to cut their losses, Kommersant reported Thursday.

But Dmitry Dobrov, head of the Union of Alcohol Product Manufacturers, said that extending the validity of old duty stamps could lead to an influx of illegal alcohol on the domestic market because they are easier to forge than the new ones.

Maxim Chernigovsky, head of the alcohol producers' association, had written to regulators

asking them to move the expiry date to September 2015 to avoid wholesalers and retailers being left with 280 million unsold bottles of strong spirits at the end of the year.

Some distributors continue to take alcohol marked with old duty stamps on the condition that they can return the stock after Jan. 1, 2014 if they are unable to sell it, Alvisa spokesman Mikhail Machnev said.

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