

Moscow Highway Left Without Tarmac Amid Citywide Roadworks

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A 500-meter stretch of the Leningradskoye Shosse, a highway in northern Moscow, that was stripped of its tarmac in late September has still not been covered with new asphalt, worsening congestion on one of the city's busiest roads, the Kommersant newspaper reported Thursday.

The delay comes amid a renovation program — called My Street — that has dug up 33 roads in Moscow to replace curbs, widen sidewalks and lay down new tarmac, according to Kommersant.

The company responsible for resurfacing Leningradskoye Shosse should have begun working on the road within 24 hours of digging it up, Roman Sychevsky, deputy head of City Hall's road inspectorate, told the paper.

Moscow City Hall has already fined the company responsible 50,000 rubles (\$750)

and promised that the damaged part of the highway will be covered with asphalt by Oct. 15.

"If there are no 'force majeure' circumstances and if the weather is fine, the roadworks should be finalized by Oct. 15," Sychevsky said.

The My Street program has elicited public outcries, with both drivers and pedestrians complaining of inconvenience, dirt and noise on blogs and social networks. Yet the program is far from over — it is supposed to be finished in 2018. Its overall cost is 126 billion rubles (\$1.9 billion), the report said.

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