

# Sochi relying on fake snow for Winter Games

By Tamara Keith, NPR

In Russia, organizers of the 2014 Winter Olympics have called on dozens of shamans to pray for snow. But the centerpiece of the Olympic snow strategy is man-made: a massive system that features more than 550 snow-making machines.

Sochi, Russia, which is hosting the Olympics, is a resort town on the relatively warm Black Sea. There are beaches and palm trees. The Alpine events will be on a mountain just 30 minutes away, where last February it was raining, not snowing.

But while snow is necessary for skiing and snowboarding, it doesn't necessarily have to fall from the sky, says Rick Kahl, editor of Ski Area Management magazine, a trade publication for resorts.

"The whole technology of snow-making has reached a point where it's possible to hold an event like this at Sochi and not have to really worry too much about whether or not there's a lot of natural snow," Kahl says.

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