

2.5 billion gene altered mosquitoes — designed to end spread of Zika, dengue and malaria — to be released in two-year experiment in California and Florida, EPA decides

Genetically modified mosquitoes might soon be whining on both U.S. coasts. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has [approved two more years](#) of testing Oxitec's genetically modified mosquitoes as living pest controls, continuing a pilot program started in 2021 in the Florida Keys and expanding it to up to four counties in California.

Now the Florida and California state governments will consider whether to grant permission.

The male mosquitoes, OX5034 *Aedes aegypti* engineered by the biotech company Oxitec, carry daughter-killing genes that get passed generation to generation. When these males mate with local females outside a lab, only the sons should survive. Those inheriting the sabotage gene will grow up to mate with normal females, dooming their daughters too.

The wild *A. aegypti* species, an invader in North America, [can spread dengue, Zika, yellow fever and other diseases](#). California first reported the invader in 2013, and by February 2022 had found it in 22 counties.

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If approved and fulfilled to the EPA-set limits in both locations, nearly 2.5 billion of these GM mosquitoes could be released before permission expires April 30, 2024. Fortunately, male mosquitoes, GM or otherwise, don't bite.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)