

Officials: GMO mosquitoes aren't 'drugs,' need EPA oversight

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U.S. Food and Drug Administration officials say genetically modified mosquitoes are not "drugs" and should be regulated by environmental authorities.

According to guidelines posted online Wednesday, federal officials have decided that mosquitoes engineered by the biotech firm Oxitec will be regulated from now on by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The guidelines clarify that products intended to function as pesticides to control mosquito populations should fall under the EPA. The FDA has authority over mosquito-related products intended to prevent or treat diseases.

Oxitec releases nonbiting [male mosquitoes](#) modified with synthetic DNA to produce offspring that die before maturing. The method aims to reduce mosquito populations that spread Zika and other viruses.

Florida officials have sought federal and public approval to follow Brazil and the Cayman Islands in releasing Oxitec's mosquitoes.

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