

Public comment to be read aloud (1.5 minutes if read slowly):

Hello I am [name] and I live in [City].

I am calling to urge you to oppose the EPA's potential experimental release of genetically engineered mosquitoes in Alameda County and California.

While mosquito abatement is important, I believe this experiment is fraught with many unanswered questions and is unnecessary. California does not suffer from the diseases that the genetically engineered mosquito is trying to address, for example we have zero cases of dengue fever. Also, previous field trials of the engineered mosquito show that it failed to reduce mosquito populations. The company is telling us to trust them but is not providing data. At a time of public health and environmental crises, there is no need to pursue activities that create more risks, especially because there are many examples around the world of effective and less risky ways of reducing mosquito populations. As a Council member elected to represent the needs of the community, I ask that you represent me: I do not want this field trial to proceed.

I ask the Mayor and members of the Berkeley City Council to tell the EPA that the field release of genetically engineered mosquitoes in CA must not be approved.

Thank you.

Some of our key concerns include

- The GE mosquito offspring are meant to carry tetracycline-dependent genes and therefore die in the absence of tetracycline in the environment, yet this antibiotic is widely used in California agriculture.
- GE mosquitoes could create hybrid mosquitoes that may be more aggressive, more difficult to eradicate, and may increase the spread of mosquito borne disease;
- GE mosquitoes may inject novel GE proteins into humans and other animals, and Oxitec has yet to show that these novel proteins would not harm humans or other animals;
- The risk assessment that Oxitec provided to the EPA is so redacted that the public cannot assess the outcomes of previous trials;
- No assessments of potential human health impacts have been conducted;
- No environmental risk or endangered species assessments have been conducted;
- No genetic monitoring program would be in place prior to the release to detect un-anticipated outcomes;
- The communities where the GE mosquitoes would be released have not been consulted.

For more information:

- A [Yale study](#) in Brazil that found that genetic material from Oxitec's GE mosquitoes was widely found in wild mosquitoes and also found that the continual release of GE mosquitoes over 27 months did not reduce populations, as intended.

- A [brief from Friends of the Earth on risk and concerns](#).
- For in-depth notes, see Friends of the Earth's [recent public comments to the EPA](#).