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FKMCD Announces ‘*Wolbachia* Male Mosquito Project’ to Study Viability of Recently Approved Mosquito Control Measure in FL Keys

The Florida Keys Mosquito Control District (FKMCD) will again be putting a cutting edge mosquito control technique to work this Summer when it releases *Wolbachia*-infected male, *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes as a means to lower the population of that species within three, 20-acre release locations.

This particular technique, developed by vendor ‘**MosquitoMate**’, has been approved for commercial use by the Environmental Protection Agency as well as the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. *Wolbachia* is a naturally occurring bacterium that affects mosquito reproduction in some mosquito species including the *Aedes aegypti*.

As part of this project, in early June, FKMCD technicians will begin releasing a limited number of *Wolbachia* -infected MALE *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes in targeted locations on Key Largo, Plantation Key and Key Colony Beach.

Male mosquitoes DO NOT BITE.

When the *Wolbachia*-infected males mate with local female *Aedes aegypti* in the vicinity, the resulting eggs do not hatch, reducing the number of adult mosquitoes.

Aedes aegypti mosquitoes thrive in urban areas, around humans and are the primary carrier of several diseases including: Yellow Fever, Dengue Fever and Zika.

The *Wolbachia* males will be prepared and shipped to FKMCD from a MosquitoMate facility in Kentucky. You can read more about them at: **mosquitomate.com**

The Florida Keys Mosquito Control District and its board have been aggressively pursuing long term alternatives to pesticides which are beginning to lose effectiveness against certain species mosquito species such as the *Aedes aegypti*.

According to Executive Director Andrea Leal: *“Protecting public health is one of the main goals of our District, which is why the development of these novel technologies is so important.”*

FKMCD has previously examined and worked with other ‘novel’ control measures that use the mosquito itself as a mode of control. In 2022, FKMCD and Oxitec released male *Aedes aegypti* that were genetically manipulated to reduce offspring.

The Oxitec releases and trial came to a close in 2024. The EPA is still evaluating the Oxitec product for potential product registration and eventual expanded use.

END

About the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District

The mission of the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District is to protect the public from health threats and nuisance issues that impact the local economy by utilizing control methods that are efficient, effective and environmentally sensitive.

Follow FKMCD on Twitter at [@FIKeysMosquito](https://twitter.com/FIKeysMosquito) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/FIKeysMosquito). For more information about the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District, please visit www.keysmosquito.org.

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