



CONNECTIONS

News and Information from OUC—The Reliable One | JANUARY 2025



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H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

MAKE A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION TO SAVE MONEY AND HELP THE PLANET

Energy tips to implement in 2025

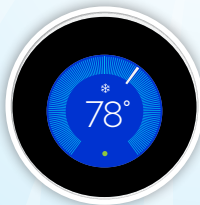
Start 2025 by saving money with these simple energy conservation tips. Not only will they help lower your bills, but they'll also have a positive impact on the planet.

HEATING AND COOLING EFFICIENCY

- Schedule annual checkups for your heating and cooling systems to keep them running efficiently.
- Regularly vacuum vents to remove dust.
- Plant trees or place container plants near windows for natural shade.
- Track your electric usage with OUC's Usage Dashboard.
- Adjust ceiling fan direction seasonally to improve air circulation.

THERMOSTAT AND APPLIANCE TIPS

- Set your thermostat to 78°F or higher for cooling, and 68°F or lower for heating.
- Conserve energy by running full loads in the dishwasher and washer.
- Clean your dryer vent regularly to enhance efficiency and prevent fires.
- Ensure your water heater is set to 120°F or lower.



WINDOW AND LIGHTING TIPS

- Use shades or blinds to control sunlight based on the season.
- Upgrade to a heat pump with a 15 SEER rating or higher to reduce heating and cooling costs.

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Change A/C filters monthly for efficient airflow.
- Replace incandescent bulbs with energy-efficient LEDs.
- Wash clothes in cold water to save energy.
- Unplug unused electronics or use smart thermostats for better control.



By following these tips, you'll save money and help the environment in 2025. Find more conservation ideas at [OUC.com/Conservation](https://www.oucreliableone.com/Conservation).

Introducing PeakShift

PeakShift empowers customers to rethink energy usage and save money, supporting OUC's commitment to Net Zero CO₂ Emissions by 2050. Learn the latest about the program at [OUCPeakSHIFT.com](https://www.oucreliableone.com/PeakShift).

**OUC PEAK
SHIFT** →



Save Energy and Money with Free In-Home Energy and Efficiency Audits

Start the new year by assessing your energy usage to keep your bills in check. OUC's FREE in-home energy efficiency audit evaluates your home's energy use and offers suggestions for improvements that can help you save.

Get started from the comfort of your home at [OUC.com/energyaudit](https://www.ouc.com/energyaudit).

Payment Changes



Starting January 1, 2025, cash and drop box payments will no longer be accepted at St. Cloud City Hall. Customers may make a utility payment with a credit/debit card in the walk-in center.

As of October 1, 2024, a **\$1.30** convenience fee has been waived for payments made via cash, money order, check or debit card, at all participating Amscot, MoneyGram, Fidelity Express and Western Union locations. For a full list of payment locations, visit [OUC.com/paymentlocations](https://www.ouc.com/paymentlocations).

Stay on Budget in the New Year with OUC's Budget Billing

OUC's Budget Billing helps you avoid surprise bills by spreading payments evenly over the year. This free service allows for predictable monthly payments to keep your budget balanced.

HOW IT WORKS:

Your fixed monthly amount is based on the average of your last 12 months of bills, including electric, water, solid waste, wastewater, and taxes. An additional percentage, determined by OUC, may be added to keep balances manageable.



Learn more or enroll at [OUC.com/budgetbilling](https://www.ouc.com/budgetbilling).

How to Read Your Bill

Did you know your monthly OUC bill provides more than just payment information? It also offers useful data, from your usage history to money-saving tips.



Learn more at [OUC.com/mybill](https://www.ouc.com/mybill).



Jumpstart Your Career with OUC's Emerging Talent Internship!

OUC's Emerging Talent Internship Program is looking for diverse, driven students ready to innovate and lead. Gain hands-on experience, tackle real-world challenges, and make an impact in your community! Learn more about OUC's internship program and available positions at [OUC.com/emergingtalent](https://www.ouc.com/emergingtalent).

Para ver toda nuestra información en español, por favor visite [espanol.ouc.com](https://www.espanol.ouc.com).



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