



# CONNECTIONS

News and Information from OUC—The *Reliable One* | DECEMBER 2014

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## Kitchen Tips For an Energy-Efficient Holiday Season



The holidays provide love, laughs and a lot of time in the kitchen. Here are a few ways to keep spirits high and energy bills low:

- Resist the temptation to open the oven door to peek at what's cooking. Most modern ovens are equipped with a tempered glass window, so simply turn on the oven light and peek through the glass. That's what it's there for!
- Don't be afraid to cook several dishes in the oven at the same time. Just leave enough room for heat to circulate around each dish.
- Clean your stovetop burners and reflectors regularly. This allows them to distribute heat more efficiently and save energy.
- Consider using your microwave as much as possible. Fast and efficient microwaves use nearly 50 percent less energy than conventional ovens.
- Since turkeys and hams typically slow roast for hours, there's no need to preheat the oven in advance.
- Keep your freezer and refrigerator doors closed as much as possible. These appliances are among the largest energy consumers in your home, often accounting for as much as 15 percent of your total usage!

## Keep It Bright. Report a Light.

If you spot a streetlight out, be sure to report it online at [www.OUC.com/streetlightout](http://www.OUC.com/streetlightout) or by phone at **407-423-9018** in Orlando/Orange County and **407-957-7373** St. Cloud/Osceola. It's simple! Just jot down the number embossed or printed on the light pole, the nearest street address and a short description of the problem.



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ORLANDO

## Keep Families Together When They Need It Most

The Ronald McDonald House® program of Orlando enables parents to stay closer to their critically ill children receiving treatment in local hospitals.

Each year, over 1,800 families reside at one of our two Ronald McDonald Houses. We provide comfort and care. Families find a network of love and support. Thanks to the generosity of the Central Florida community, our doors are open 365 days a year.

Although nightly operating costs are approximately \$74 per room, per night, a donation of just \$20 can help sponsor a family's overnight stay — allowing us to keep our services free of charge to them. Please consider contributing to Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Central Florida as a gift to yourself or a loved one this holiday season. Thank you!

Donate today at [www.ronaldmcdonaldhouseorlando.org](http://www.ronaldmcdonaldhouseorlando.org) or call **407-206-0957**.

## Lending a Hand Project Care

Making ends meet during the holidays can be very difficult for some families. With your support, OUC's Project Care can provide emergency assistance to those who have experienced a recent personal or family crisis that has placed them in danger of losing their utility service. For every dollar donated, OUC contributes two dollars to the program.

Go to [www.ouc.com](http://www.ouc.com) to contribute or call **407-423-9018** in Orlando/Orange County or **407-957-7373** in St. Cloud. OUC customers in need of assistance should call **United Way** at **2-1-1**.

## Make a list and check it twice

- Inspect strands of holiday lights before you put them up. To prevent fires, discard any strands with frayed or loose wires.
- Use decorative lights rated for "indoor" and "outdoor" only in those designated areas.
- Turn off all decorations before you leave home or go to bed.
- Keep candles away from trees and draperies, and never leave lit candles unattended.
- Be careful not to overload extension cords and electrical outlets.
- Consider switching to LED lights. They're more efficient and significantly reduce the risk of fire.

**Keep your holidays safe and bright  
with OUC—The Reliable One.**

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