



# CONNECTIONS

News and Information from OUC—The *Reliable One* | DECEMBER 2019

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## TESTING HYDROGEN STORAGE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY FUTURE

As OUC works to move closer to its renewable energy goals with solar at the forefront, energy storage is essential to maintaining the reliability our customers have come to expect.

That's why our Emerging Technologies team was recently awarded a \$9 million grant – partially funded by the U.S. Department of Energy – to study hydrogen as a means of storing electricity.

The technology holds the potential to revolutionize solar storage, in comparison to the industry standard lithium-ion batteries.

“A hydrogen battery system could be the key to unlocking reliable and long-lasting solar generation during cloudy days and at night,” said **Justin Kramer**, OUC's Supervisor of Emerging Technologies & Renewables.

“We see this pilot project as just the first step toward building an integrated system of sustainable energy resources.”

With four new solar farms slated for construction by the end of 2023, projects like this are crucial to ensuring a smooth transition into a clean energy future. Learn more about OUC's innovative research at [OUCblog.com](https://www.oucblog.com).

## ANNUAL OUC CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT SUPPORTS LITERACY ADVOCACY



OUC raised  
**\$30,000**  
for Central Florida  
literacy advocacy

The annual OUC Charity Golf Tournament drew more than 130 players for an 18-hole scramble in November, raising \$30,000 for adult and child literacy advocacy organizations in Central Florida. Checks of \$10,000 were presented to the **Adult Literacy League of Central Florida (ALLCF)**, **Need to Read, Inc.**, and the **Early Learning Coalition of Orange County**.

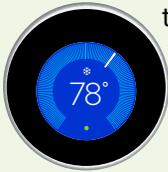
ALLCF estimates that one in five adults in Central Florida reads at or below a fifth grade level, and OUC is proud to partner with these organizations to tee up literacy solutions.



## 5 ENERGY-SAVING HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS

**1 CORDLESS POWER TOOLS** — Cordless screwdrivers, drills and saws, as well as yard tools like lawn mowers and leaf blowers that equipped with ENERGY STAR battery chargers, use about 30 percent less energy than their corded counterparts.

**2 PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTAT** — A programmable thermostat can provide nearly \$200 per year in energy savings. Some can even “learn” your family’s schedule to provide more personalization. Perhaps best of all, many smart thermostats now allow you to adjust your climate controls remotely from a smart phone.



**3 MOTION-SENSOR POWER STRIPS** — A power strip may seem like a boring gift, but you can purchase models that switch on and off as you enter or leave a room. This keeps electronics from wasting energy when not in use and eliminates the need to hit the red power button all the time.

**4 PRESSURE COOKERS** — Pressure cookers provide, by far, the most energy-efficient way to cook. Not only do they heat up faster, but they can cut energy usage by as much as 70 percent.

**5 SOLAR-POWERED GADGETS** — Going solar isn’t just for the rooftop. You can purchase solar-powered lights, smartphone chargers, backpacks and more. These can be a great lesson on energy conservation for kids, too!

## HOLIDAY DECORATING SAFETY TIPS

- ✿ Thoroughly inspect light strands before you hang them. Be sure to discard any with frayed or loose wires, as those are more prone to catching fire.
- ✿ Check all lighting instructions for “indoor,” “outdoor,” or “indoor/outdoor.” Only hang them in those designated areas.
- ✿ Keep live Christmas trees watered daily. A dry tree decked with electrical lights can be a major fire hazard.

- ✿ When purchasing an artificial tree, look for one that’s fire resistant. Use a timer or turn off all decorations before leaving the house or heading to bed.
- ✿ Keep candles away from trees and draperies, and never leave them unattended.
- ✿ Consider using LED lights. They’re much more efficient and reduce the risk of fire.

For more energy-saving tips, visit [www.OUCblog.com](http://www.OUCblog.com).

## ROCKIN’ THE CLOUD - NEW YEAR’S EVE PARTY

Find your place in the cloud this year on New Year’s Eve as we rock in the New Year with our 4th Annual Rockin’ the Cloud New Year’s Eve Block Party. The City of St. Cloud along with OUC–The *Reliable One* and Experience Kissimmee will host **Rockin’ The Cloud 2019** on **Tuesday, December 31, 2019**, from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. in Downtown St. Cloud.

This block party will be rockin’ with three stages between New York and Pennsylvania Avenues, with live

**For more information, contact St. Cloud Parks and Recreation at 407-957-7243, [parksandrecreation@stcloud.org](mailto:parksandrecreation@stcloud.org), or [www.stcloud.org](http://www.stcloud.org).**

music from local artists such as Maiden Voyage, Howling Midnight and Brooke Evans. Participants will enjoy event specials from local businesses, commemorative event prizes and of course our very special countdown to midnight Cloud Drop!



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