



CONNECTIONS



News and Information from OUC—The *Reliable One* | APRIL 2026

CELEBRATE EARTH MONTH

by Taking Charge of Your Home's Energy Use!



SMALL SHIFTS IN DEMAND MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Earth Month is the perfect moment to pause, look around your home, and ask a simple but powerful question: **How much energy do I really use — and how much of it do I actually need?** Taking charge of your home's energy use is good for the planet, helps lower your monthly bill and reduces strain on the grid during peak times.

UNDERSTAND YOUR ELECTRIC DEMAND

Every appliance, device and light switch adds to the overall demand your home places on the grid. High demand — especially during upcoming summer afternoons when A/C is cranking across thousands of Central Florida homes and businesses — puts extra pressure on the system. **The good news?** Small changes can make a big difference.

SIMPLE STEPS TO LOWER DEMAND

One of the most powerful steps you can take is “staggering” major appliance use during early mornings or late evenings. Don't run the dryer, dishwasher and oven at the same time, for example. That, along with avoiding peak afternoon use, helps keep your demand lower and your bill more manageable.



EXPLORE SMART SOLUTIONS

Earth Month is a great time to explore and upgrade to smarter, energy-saving technologies that help you save and lessen demand without sacrificing comfort:

- Smart thermostats
- Energy efficient appliances
- Advanced power strips



Follow these tips and you can help reduce strain on the grid and support a cleaner, more resilient energy system. To learn more about electric demand and how to reduce it, go to [OUC.com/myusage](https://www.oucreliableone.com/myusage).



CELEBRATE EARTH MONTH WITH US

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
April 25	St. Cloud Earth Day	Veterans Memorial Library	10 a.m. – 1 p.m.



5 Tips to Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place



Trees can improve your home's curb appeal and help reduce energy costs if positioned correctly. Remember these tips:

- 1 Choose the right tree:** Ensure it fits your space and won't grow into power lines.
- 2 Plant smart:** If you must plant near power lines, choose trees that will stay under 15 feet at maturity.
- 3 Call 811 before digging:** Call ahead and avoid damaging underground utilities.
- 4 Keep equipment clear:** Maintain vegetation-free zones around electric and water meters and transformers.
- 5 Stay safe:** Keep a 10-foot distance from power lines and avoid trimming near them.

Ready to grow smart this spring? Check out OUCblog.com/tree for tips and guidelines to help your trees thrive in the right place.



Stay Informed with OUC's Outage Map



When the lights go out, OUC's Outage Map is your go-to source for real-time information — see the location of an outage, the cause, estimated restoration times and more.

Want updates without checking the map?

Sign up for outage alerts and get notified automatically when an outage impacts your property.

For a guide to reading the Outage Map and details on how to report outages, visit OUCblog.com/outage.

Lessen Your Demand Tip

Love grilling? Your wallet does too

Cooking outdoors is one of the joys of living in the Sunshine State — and it also can help lower your electric bill without heating up your kitchen. When you fire up the grill instead of your oven, you also reduce demand on the grid, especially during busy evening hours when A/C and laundry may be running.

Learn more about peak demand — the highest amount of electricity flowing to your home at any one time — and how it impacts rates at OUCblog.com/peak.

Unlock Savings with OUC Rebates for Appliances and Home Upgrades



Boost energy efficiency with a new A/C unit, water heater and more

OUC offers incentives for installing energy-efficient appliances and other home upgrades. Experience long-term savings thanks to increased efficiency and get money back with rebates as a credit on your bill.

- **Heat Pump A/C – OUC Rebate:** up to \$1,150
- **Heat Pump Water Heater – OUC Rebate:** up to \$500
- **Window Replacement – OUC Rebate:** up to \$1.50 per sq. ft.
- **Ceiling Insulation – OUC Rebate:** up to 10¢ per sq. ft.
- **Duct Repair/Replacement – OUC Rebate:** up to \$100



For more information and to apply, visit OUC.com/rebates.

Para ver toda nuestra información en español, por favor visite espanol.ouc.com.



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