

Top 10 posts for January

Kasey Panetta, Associate Editor

We had a record-breaking January here at ECN online with our most trafficked month in the history of the website. So, without further delay, here's a rundown of the most read, most popular, most awesome articles on the web. Take a look at what you missed the first time around or check up on an old favorite to see the conversation in the comments. Keep checking out the Lead at [\[1\]www.ecnmag.com](http://www.ecnmag.com) [\[2\]](#) and follow us on Twitter [@ecnonline](#) [\[3\]](#) for our most up-to-date articles.



1. [Why the computer mouse will soon be obsolete](#) **[4]**

By Kasey Panetta, Associate Editor

Leap Motion designed a “near-mode finger/hand 3D motion detection device” that allows you to control your computer with just the motion of your hands in the air. Need to get a closer look at a small font? Pinch the air. Want to switch to another window? Swipe your hand. Want to plan a route on Google Maps? Use your fingers. It could be the future of computer interfaces, but for now it's the number one story.

2. [Texas' light bulb law: Not the brightest bulb on the tree](#) **[5]**

By Karl Stephan, Consulting Engineer, Texas State University, San Marcos.

As of Jan. 1, it is illegal to make or sell 100-watt and 75-watt light bulbs that don't meet the efficiency standards of the federal Energy Independence and Security Act, according to Karl Stephan, Consulting Engineer, Texas State University, San Marcos. Well, everywhere except for Texas. Stephan argues the dangers and challenging of legislating the rapidly evolving field of technology.

3. [Would you steal energy?](#) **[6]**

By Kasey Panetta, Associate Editor

We like to consider ECN a standup community, but we were curious if they would be interested in the business of “stealing” energy using a harvester that takes advantage of unused energy in electromagnetic fields. It would take about 24 hours to charge one full battery, so it's probably not the most efficient energy source, but it is a pretty clean and easy one, which lacks the investment and infrastructure required for solar or wind power.



4. [Are we running](#)

[out of wind?](#) [7]

By M. Simon Technical Contributor

Gamesa USA decided to pull out of a planned wind farm in Illinois and according to the state university's Center for Renewable energy, there are no more wind farms in the plans. Wind and solar are expensive prospects where the technology hasn't quite caught up with the idea, according to M. Simon. Luckily, we have a few decades before we run out of coal, natural gas, and oil to figure it out.

5. [This flashlight can operate on any battery](#) [8]

By Kasey Panetta, Associate Editor

Any Battery Light can be used with a variety of batteries or combinations of batteries. The natural disasters in Japan prompted Panasonic to create a light where you wouldn't have to scramble to find just the right battery in an emergency situation. The resulting flashlight can be used with AAA, AA, C or D-sized batteries and will last around 86 hours.

6. [It's BAAACK: Ready or not, here comes RoHS 2 K](#) [9]

By Ken Manchen, Director of Safety & Environmental Affairs, Newark element14

RoHS 2 took effect January 2, 2013, adding medical devices and monitoring and control instruments to the regulated categories and possibly including HBCDD, DEHP, BBP, DBP in the list of highly-concerning substances.

7. [What's mine should be mine: Ruling makes it illegal to unlock your phone](#) [10]

By Jason Lomborg, Technical Editor

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act legalizes jail breaking for three years, but it makes unlocking new phones illegal without the express permission of the carrier. As Lomborg says, it won't affect second hand markets like eBay, but, legally, you won't be able to unlock your brand-new iPhone.

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Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

8. Meet the Luddites: They fought the future with hammers and lost, but their legacy lives on [11]

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

Historically speaking, the Luddites were a group of skilled laborers who were replaced by looms run by unskilled laborers. Upon discovering this, the Luddites promptly smashed the looms in protest. Fast forward to modern day and the name is associated with people who turn up their nose at technology or someone who isn't quite hip to the kids.

9. The laws of global warming [12]

By EurekaAlert!

One professor is deeply concerned about the effects of geo-engineering when it comes to fixing climate change. Though the concept dates back to the 1800s, the idea of manipulating the environment to counter the effects of global warming is alive and well in the scientific community. The question now is whether it will cause more problems than it solves.

10. Will a high-velocity, DNA-tagging police pellet gun deter protesters? [13]

By Kasey Panetta, Associate Editor

In order to minimize risk to protesters and police, SelectaMark, a UK security company, designed a High Velocity System that shoots uniquely-coded DNA pellets that leave an identifying mark on violent protesters upon contact but leaves them unharmed. While this is better than being shot, tazed, or hit, all it does is mark the person. It doesn't stop them from doing whatever they're doing or help police track them in an efficient way. Right now, this technology provides more questions than answers.

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