

'New Day' in milking in Clarksville

This summer Dan Bolin went to the reading program at the Clarksville Library with his children. While this may not seem like a big deal to some, it was a big deal for him and his wife, Lynn. As the owners of New Day Dairy in Clarksville, two years ago a trip to the library may not have been possible due to their herd's milking schedule.

Then in December of 2015, the Bolins began milking their cows with a robot, making the demands not necessarily less but different. "It's no less work, but more flexible work," said Dan.

The over 100 cows usually milk three times a day and on average each produces about 10.5 gallons, or 90 pounds, of milk each day. According to Dan, the cows know when to go in for milking partly out of habit—and the treats they receive while milking are an added bonus.

Each cow wears a transponder on their ankle. The transponder is an activity tracker, much like what many people wear. The tracker monitors when

the cow milks and even when the cow is ready for breeding.

As an additional set of "eyes" for the Bolins, when something may not be quite right with a cow, the robot system and transponder send Dan a notification through an app on his phone alerting him that one of the herd may need attention. For Dan, "The challenge is 1,000 variables."

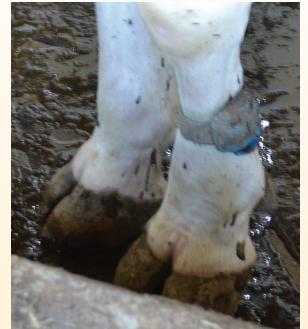
The cows' comfort is very important at New Day Dairy. In the barn, they have sand to lie in and are free to eat, drink and rest on their own time. Breezy on a summer day and virtually free of bugs, the barn is very comfortable.

Butler County REC is not the only cooperative to which the Bolins belong. They are also members of Prairie Farms, who earlier this year merged with Swiss Valley. The milk from Bolin's herd is processed into cheese at a plant in Luana, Iowa.

Dan, Lynn, and their three children, six-year-old Amara, four-year-old Vance, and three-month-old Judah, live

with their cows—in an extension of the barn. Their hope is to one day turn the addition into a bed and breakfast. The highlight of the home is the large second-floor window overlooking the entire cattle operation in the barn.

The venture has been a great learning experience. As Lynn said, "You can try to prepare as much as you can for anything but you can still prepare more." Follow along with the Bolin's adventure by visiting their website www.newdaydairy.com, which includes Lynn's blog, and liking them on Facebook, www.facebook.com/newdaydairy.



The transponder monitors everything from milk production to if the cow is ready to be bred.



The Bolin family: (back from left) Dan and Lynn (holding Judah) and (front from left) Amara and Vance.



A cow (with her head down) moves into place to be milked by the robot. There is a second station to the right of the robot.

Harvest workers: Take time to reap a safe harvest

Harvest can be an exciting and exhausting time. However, the rush can also yield tragic outcomes. Each year, dozens of farm workers are killed and hundreds are injured in accidents involving power lines and electrical equipment.

Farmers are urged to review with all workers the farm activities that take place around power lines. Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance. Keep equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines – above, below and to the side.

Farm workers should also take these steps:

- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Don't raise any equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines.
- Never raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain in bins.
- Use qualified electricians for work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

If a vehicle comes in contact with a power line: Stay on the equipment, warn others to stay away and call 911. Do not get off the equipment until the utility crew says it is safe to do so.

If for safety reasons you are forced to leave the equipment, jump off with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Keep your feet together while hopping to safety.

Never attempt to get back on or touch the equipment. Some electrocutions have occurred after the operator dismounts and tries to get back on the equipment. For more information on farm electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.



Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.



**BAD TIME
TO TEXT CHRIS
ABOUT FRIDAY
NIGHT**



**MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN**

Take the Pledge. Join your fellow Iowans who have pledged to move over or slow down for Iowa's utility workers at moveoveriowa.com.

**WHAT THE SIGN REALLY SAYS IS –
MOVE OVER OR SLOW DOWN.** Iowa law requires motorists to change lanes or slow down when approaching a stationary utility vehicle that has its flashing lights activated. Failure to do so can result in hefty fines or the loss of your driver's license.



Not all air filters are created equal



Air filters should be changed regularly because the air inside our homes is full of particles.

Forced air heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) systems require effective air filtration for energy efficiency, maintaining clean(ish) ductwork and good indoor air quality.

The Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) rating system tells how effective a filter is at trapping particles. The scale runs from one to 16.

HVAC systems operate at a particular pressure and should support MERV ratings of one to four. A higher value increases resistance, making the system work harder, losing efficiency and increasing wear on components.

Check your system's operating manual for recommendations. Otherwise, buy a pleated filter (MERV three to five), and check it once a month. Spend a little more and breathe easier when you regularly replace your air filters.



Invest in Efficiency

The benefits of some home efficiency investments aren't seen as quickly as others. Here's how a few upgrades compare over time:



Set Water Heater to 120°
No Cost; Save \$73/yr

Open Window Blinds in Winter; Close in Summer
No Cost; Save \$35/yr

Adjust Thermostat 1° Down in Winter, 1° Up in Summer
No Cost; Save \$82/yr



ENERGY STAR Clothes Washer
Costs \$194 extra; Save \$140/yr

ENERGY STAR Refrigerator
Costs \$97 extra; Save \$100/yr

Wrap Hot Water Tank
Costs \$85; Save \$23/yr

Upgrade to ENERGY STAR Heat Pump (From 10 to 15 SEER)
Costs \$5,700; Save \$408/yr

Instant Benefit

1-5 Year Payback

Long Term Investment

Find more ways to save at **TogetherWeSave.com.**

Source: U.S. Department of Energy Home Energy Saver, Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. Based on national average savings; actual savings will vary by climate.

Understanding energy demand and purchasing

To understand your energy bill, it is important to understand how electricity is made and delivered to your home.

Electricity is generated by a generation and transmission cooperative (G&T). The electricity travels over high-voltage transmission lines to substations, reducing the voltage to a safer level. It then travels over distribution power lines into your home.

We help to determine how much electricity our members need to power their homes and businesses. This is where "consumption" and "demand" come in.

Consumption is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh). Demand is measured in kilowatts (kW). A lightbulb "consumes" a certain number of watts; let's say 100 watts per hour. If that lightbulb stays on for 10 hours (using a total of 1,000 watts), it "demands" a certain number of kilowatts (in this case, 1 kW; 1,000 watts is equal to 1 kW) from the generation station.

If you turn on 10 - 100-watt lightbulbs in your home for one hour, you are still consuming the same number of kW. However, you are placing a demand on the utility to have those kW available to you over the course of one hour, instead of 10 hours. This requires the generation and transmission plant to produce more power in less time to meet your demand.

Your cooperative purchases kilowatt hours from the G&T based on the average demand of members. Peak demand refers to the time of day when the demand for electricity is highest. Using electricity during this peak demand period often costs more to both the cooperative and to our members.

Your electricity bill fluctuates because of demand, and we will always meet the demand to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to your family.

Why Does the Type of Power We Provide Matter?



Up to 75 percent of every dollar you pay your local electric cooperative goes directly for wholesale power costs. Bucket trucks, poles and wire, right-of-way trimming, payroll, and other operating expenses are covered by the rest.

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Give hunting safety a shot

Hunters have their sights on wild game when preparing for hunting season; however, including thoughts of electrical safety can help prevent an accident with utility equipment. Your electric cooperative urges hunters to take precautions and be aware of potential electrical hazards while hunting.

- Always carry emergency supplies in the event of an accident—a cell phone, whistle and flashlight.
- Never shoot power lines or electrical equipment.
- Note the location of power lines and other electrical equipment before you begin a hunt.
- Obey all signs that advise electrical safety, especially when selecting the location for a tree stand. Tree stands are the leading cause of hunting injuries.
- When setting up and taking down the stand, make sure you do not make contact with any overhead electrical equipment.
- If you are using a portable electrical generator on your hunting trip, make sure that you do not run it in a confined area, and use it outside only.



Never use power poles to support a tree stand.

Member pricing for water heaters

Marathon
WATER HEATERS



Model	Retail Cost	Member Rebate	Member Cost*
50 gallon - tall or short	\$899	\$600	\$299
85 gallon	\$1,199	\$900	\$299
105 gallon	\$1,349	\$900	\$449

*Plus tax applied to the retail cost.

Additional \$300 discount for a unit installed in a member's new home or when replacing a gas water heater.

Contact our Energy Efficiency Department for more information.

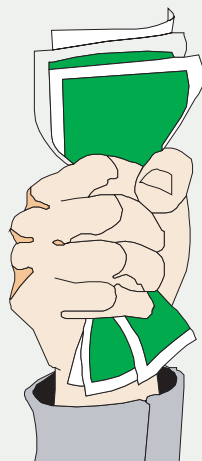
You could win a \$100 bill credit! Don't forget to sign up

From now until September 22 if you sign up for automatic bill pay with Butler County REC, we will enter your name into a drawing for a \$100 bill credit. For those members already participating in our automatic bill pay, you will be entered into the \$100 bill credit drawing, as well.

As a new sign up, if you mail in a form, you will receive a one-time \$5 bill credit. Forms can be found on our website at www.butlerrec.coop or call the office and we will send you the form. If you sign up through SmartHub on our website, you will receive a one-time \$10 bill credit.

Bill credits will appear on the first billing following notification of your authorization. The \$100 bill credit will appear on the October bill for September usage.

Automatic bill payment is offered at no charge for members. Payments are deducted from your bank account or credit card on the 28th of each month, or the next banking day if the 28th is a bank holiday or weekend.



watts smart

\$10 incentive to participate



- Help reduce rising power costs by allowing us to cycle your electric storage water heater during peak demand periods. You probably won't even realize when your water heater is being cycled.
- Receive a free in-home peak alert device that gives instant updates when peak demand situations are near or occurring.
- Watts Smart load switches are installed at no cost for members.
- Unit must be installed before credit is applied.

Sign up by calling 888.267.2726



Butler County REC

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

INtouch is published monthly for members of Butler County Rural Electric Cooperative
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