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## Green Businesses Using RFID Tags to Help the Environment

Posted on Tuesday, January 24, 2012 By [Maryruth Belsey Priebe](#)

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Technology has often posed problems for the environment, especially when it comes to its disposal. But technology can also be a boon for the environment, helping to conserve and protect. These [green business ideas](#) use RFID tags - radio frequency identification tags - to reduce environmental destruction and make waste disposal more eco-friendly, too.

### Using RFIDs to Stop Illegal Logging

Can technology make illegal logging a thing of the past? The Forestry Department in Malaysia hopes so. They are currently trialing RFID technology as part of their anti-illegal logging campaign, according to [The Star](#). Under pressure from the European Union to ensure that all exported wood, and products made from it, is harvested sustainably, Malaysia has turned to technology to solve their problem.

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In this scheme, RFID tags are attached to individual trees, which then makes it possible to record and trace each felled tree, following its movements in order to apprehend illegal loggers. The hope is that with a successful program, the government can create export licenses that meet EU standards. Of course, Malaysia's forests will benefit, too.



### Using RFIDs to Minimize Waste Production

As landfill space diminishes, costs for collecting and disposing of waste go up. When costs are passed on to wasters, this is good news for encouraging consumers to practice their three Rs in order to reduce the overall volume of trash being sent for burial. But the current system bills each residential trash-maker a flat rate from week to week,

regardless of how much they throw away. There's no incentive to create less waste, and a disproportionate amount is charged to those who really ratchet down their garbage production.

Enter RFIDs. A business professor at Southeastern Louisiana University has proposed that RFIDs be used to incentivize individuals to participate in recycling programs. RFIDs might be attached to every trash can in a "pay as you throw" scheme that charges based on the weight of waste in each bin. The RFID technology would help to lower costs to those who conserve, and raise costs for those who don't. The hope is that this system might just result in more reducing, reusing, and recycling. Let's hope some green entrepreneur picks up the idea and makes it happen.

Image Via Flickr: [Danka](#) and [cornstaruk](#)

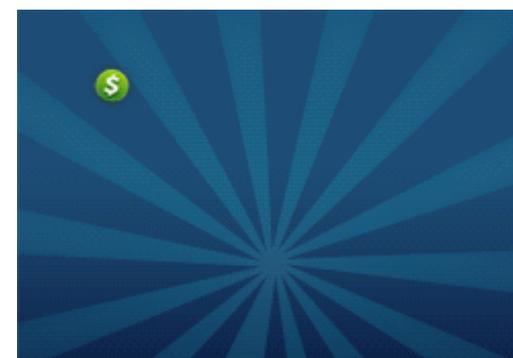
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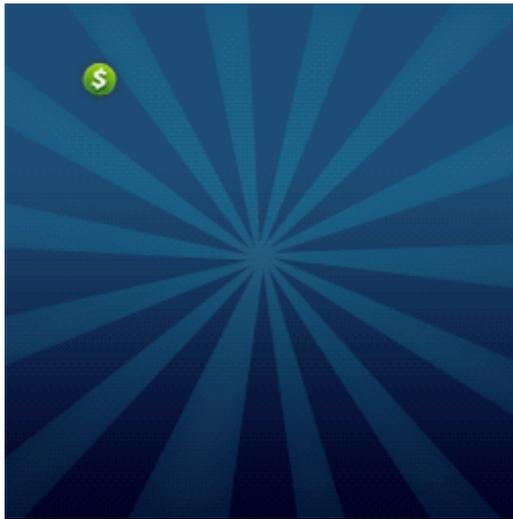
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This post was written by:



### Maryruth Belsey Priebe

Maryruth has been seeking the keys to environmental justice - both at home and at work - for over a decade. Growing up adjacent to wild spaces, Maryruth developed a healthy respect (and whimsical appreciation) for things non-human, but her practical mind constantly draws her down to earth to ponder tangible solutions to complex eco-problems.

With interests that range from green living to green business, sustainable building designs to organic gardening practices, ecosystem restoration to environmental health, Maryruth has been exploring and writing about earth-matters for most of her life. Of special interest is the subject of ecopsychology and the role the natural world plays in the long-term health and well-being of humanity. You can learn more about Maryruth's work at [www.JadeCreative.ca](http://www.JadeCreative.ca).

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## Comments

**harvesting rain says:**

Friday, February 24, 2012 at 12:59 pm



Finally, using RFID for a better cause instead of shoving in our bodies and our pets like the media was pushing a couple years back. I knew these things could be used for a better solution to something like this.

**Sean says:**

Sunday, February 26, 2012 at 1:44 pm



Even though the cost might have gone down over time, I don't see them getting so cheap as to attach to every little item that ends up in the garbage. The cost to make them would probably be prohibitive too. Perhaps adding cash deposits on more items (certain states now do it for cans) would help reduce waste since it would be recycled instead to get the deposit back.

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