

Electronic Tattletales!

You might not want others to know where you go if you "bug out." But - what if you were carrying electronic tattletales with you?

1. **RFID tags**. For \$35, I can get my dog "chipped" with a small RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tag that identifies him if he is caught running loose. A small RFID tag is inserted under his skin. So far, I don't have THAT - but I do have a credit card that has an RFID tag! If you shop at a store that has electronics to detect shoplifting, your purchases have RFID tags. Scanning these items at purchase is supposed to destroy the RFIS tags. Does it? I ask what the cashier is scanning and remove it at home. Pounding an RFID tag with a hammer destroys it quite well. Fun, too! See the Tip, "**Credit Card Shield from RFID!**"

2. **Passports, and maybe soon, drivers' licenses**. Your US passport has an RFID tag, and some states are considering drivers licenses with RFID tags.

3. **Credit Cards, #1**. Some credit cards now have RFID tags. When you enter a store - or even walk past it - your credit card RFID can be accessed. Enough information is on your credit card ID to identify you.

4. **Cell Phones**. Because cell phones pass their signals on from cell phone tower to cell phone tower, it's possible to locate a cell phone that is turned on. Sprint has a "Family Locator" option that allows parents to locate their children's cell phones with a GPS feature - if the kids have their phones turned on. To prevent your cell phone from tattletale-ing your location, turn it off. Remember, it tells where you are when you turn it on again. Some say it tattletales when it's off - I doubt this! - but taking the battery out would fix this.

5. **GPS units**. Interstate truckers, taxi drivers, and law enforcement vehicles have GPS units that can pinpoint their locations. Does this work for the GPS in your personal vehicle? I've been told that any GPS unit can be pinpointed. The question is how yours would be identified with you. If the GPS is in your cell phone, that's a match! Theoretically, you make another match when you mail the guarantee card back to the GPS manufacturer with the GPS serial number and your name and home address. Aren't product guarantees just great?

6. **Credit Cards, #2**. Using a credit card is an electronic transaction tied to a specific location. It's possible for banks or law enforcement to track you, if you use a credit card. Usually they cannot respond quickly enough to meet you at the gas station, but they'll know the general area to find you.

Am I over-reacting with this Tip? I sure hope so!