

# Gadgets: Seek out 'green' gadgets in celebration of Earth Day

April 15 2010, By Gregg Ellman

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solCHAT

Today's world is all about portability when it comes to gadgets and there are plenty of "green" choices for the upcoming Earth Day on April 22.

The solCHAT from Scosche is a well-designed solar-powered Bluetooth speakerphone allowing any Bluetooth-enabled cell phone to work hands-free.

Using the device is simple. It comes with suction cups for mounting on a windshield and a clip to place on a sun visor.

After it's mounted, pair it with your phone (this can vary from phone to phone) and you're ready to go.

I chose to mount it on my windshield within arm's reach - but not blocking my sight for driving.

This gave me great access to hear my call and for the caller to hear me, along with a clear view for the solar panel to keep it charged up.

Users can also charge the unit with a USB cable or car adapter, which both come with the solCHAT.

Users will get caller ID announcements over the speaker from up to 1,000 contacts. It will also allow one-touch voice dialing with most Bluetooth cell phones.

Most of the controls are set with a multi-function button and are explained well in the quick-start guide. The all-important volume buttons are conveniently located right on the front of the unit.

Details: [scosche.com](http://scosche.com), \$99.99

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Scosche also has the solBAT II, a solar powered back up battery and charging device for any portable USB gadget.

Any iPod/[iPhone](#), cell phone and many digital cameras can get the necessary power to keep working after charging from the 1500ma [lithium-ion battery](#).

A windshield mount is included to charge while driving or it can be charged via USB. Users can also attach the included carabiner for portability.

The setup is simple because since there is none. Just charge it up however you choose (USB or solar) and then charge your devices. Once

it's dead, charge it again.

Details: [scosche.com](http://scosche.com), \$29.99

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Exclusively for iPhone and iPod users is the Novothink Solar Surge charger.

This clever unit acts as a carrying case and a charger since it has a solar panel built into the case.

Inside of the panel is a lithium ion battery, which gives power-hungry devices about 60 minutes on a 2G network or 30 minutes of talk time on a 3G network.



Novothink's Solar Surge

If you're on a 4G network, I have no idea on your talk time but do the math from above and you can figure out you will have even less time.

The Solar Surge is built with smart charging technology, which sends a charge to the device after receiving a signal that it is needed.

The case has 4 built-in LED list to let users know how much battery power remains.

Details: [novothink.com](http://novothink.com), \$79.95 iPhone and \$69.95 - iPod Touch

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OK, this one is a stretch for my gadget column but I still like it so I'm going to tell you about it.

The EZ Grill from P&M Products is a portable/recyclable grill made of nothing but charcoal, grill grate, foil pain and a stand.

While foremost it's great for portability, the convenience of little or no cleanup is what makes this for me.

After lighting it with one match, the grill should last about 1 1/2 hours.

So why am I including this in my Earth Day column? Because it's approved by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Details: [ezgrill.com](http://ezgrill.com), \$4.99 for Regular Size (1.81 lbs); \$9.99 for Party Size (3.31 lbs)

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The Sceptre 24-inch HD LCD TV is an Energy Star 3.0 compliant monitor that uses 40 percent less electricity.

TV enthusiasts will enjoy this TV's ultra-fast 2 ms response time along with a 4,000:1 contrast ratio.

The widescreen 1080p unit is loaded with features including built-in speakers and dual HDMI and USB ports for listening to music or viewing your photos

Details: [sceptre.com](http://sceptre.com), \$399 available in black, blue, chrome, pink and red

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PowerGenix NiZn rechargeable AA batteries are made with new Eco-Friendly technology.

These batteries (1.6V/2500mWh) can be charged over and over for use in keyboards, digital cameras or most any electronic device needing the AA power.

The NiZn batteries are made with 100 percent recyclable and Non-Toxic materials and should be disposed of properly when the charging life is exhausted.



PowerGenix NiZn rechargeable batteries

As stated on the company website, PowerGenix batteries are certified as recyclable by the Rechargeable [Battery](#) Recycling Coalition (RBRC), a nonprofit public service organization dedicated to recycling rechargeable batteries. The batteries can be recycled at more than 50,000 RBRC collection sites in the U.S. and Canada.

Using the rechargeable batteries also gives users a big cost savings compared with purchasing non-rechargeable batteries over and over. This also eliminates an endless amount of the disposable batteries from hitting our landfills.

A four-pack of the batteries can be purchased for \$26 and comes with a 1-hour charger.

Details: [powergenix.com](http://powergenix.com)

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