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SAFETY GUARD FOR ELECTRIC OUTLETS

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Fig. 1.

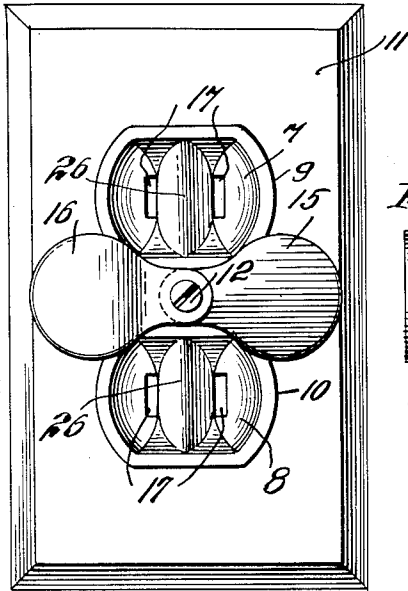


Fig. 2.

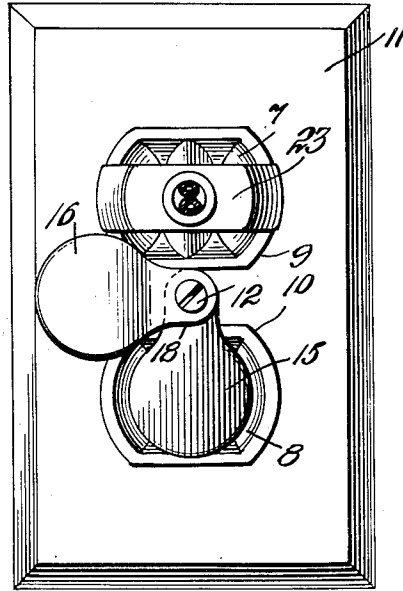


Fig. 7.

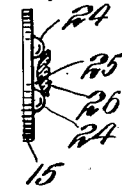


Fig. 3.

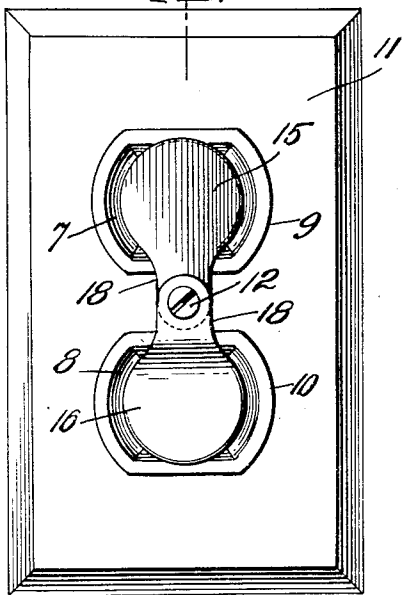


Fig. 4.

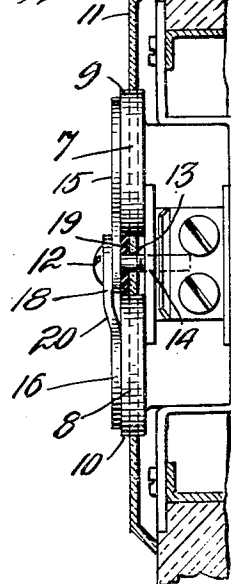
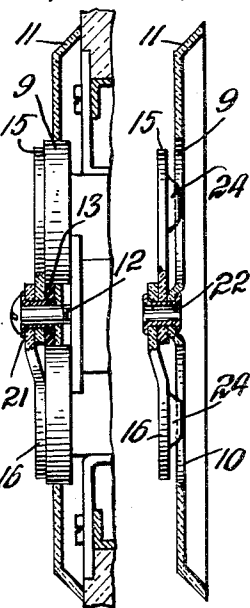


Fig. 5. Fig. 6.



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SAFETY GUARD FOR ELECTRIC OUTLETS

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1 Claim. (Cl. 173—330)

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The invention herein disclosed relates to the protection of baseboard and wall fixtures, the general purposes of the invention being to provide a satisfactory form of guard which will prevent the touching of live contacts or the insertion of metal objects into such outlet receptacles.

Particularly, it is a purpose of the invention to provide an efficient form of guard which may be readily applied to existing fixtures.

Other important objects of the invention are to provide protective means of the character indicated which will be both simple and inexpensive.

Further it is an object of the invention to provide protective means which will not destroy or impair the ornamental appearance of the ordinary face plates and which will not interfere in any way with the full and intended use of the fixture.

Other desirable objects are set forth or will appear in the course of the following specification.

The drawing accompanying and forming part of the specification illustrates certain present preferred embodiments of the invention. The actual physical structure, however, may be modified and changed as regards the immediate illustration, all within the true intent and broad scope of the invention as hereinafter defined and claimed.

Fig. 1 in the drawing is a front elevation of an outlet fixture having the invention applied thereto and showing the covers turned to a mid-position exposing both outlet receptacles.

Fig. 2 is a similar view showing the lower cover in protective position and the upper cover turned out of the way of an attachment plug engaged in the upper outlet fixture.

Fig. 3 is a view similar to Fig. 1 showing both covers in protective position over the outlet receptacles.

Fig. 4 is a broken vertical sectional view as on substantially the plane of line 4—4 of Fig. 3.

Figs. 5 and 6 are similar views illustrating other, modified forms of the invention.

Fig. 7 is an edge view showing one of the covers as interlockingly engaged with the center ridge of one of the outlets.

The invention is shown as applied to a typical fixture having two outlet receptacles 7 and 8 projecting through the openings 9, 10 provided for them in a face plate or so-called wall plate 11.

These wall plates are usually secured in place by a single screw 12 extending through an open-

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ing 13 in the plate between the receptacle openings into a screw seat 14, Fig. 4, in the body of the fixture.

A special feature of the invention is the utilization of this mounting screw as a means for locating and mounting the guards or covers for the outlet receptacles.

These covers are shown as flat paddle shaped members 15, 16 of a size to cover the attachment blade openings 17 in the receptacles and having narrowed shank portions 18 such as will leave the blade receiving portions of the receptacles uncovered when the guards are swung clear of the receptacles as in Fig. 1.

The blades may be pivotally mounted in various ways.

In the first form illustrated, Figs. 1 to 4, they are shown as directly engaged by the plate mounting screw 12 and thus centered so as to swing in opposite directions over the receptacles spaced equally at opposite sides of the central screw opening in the plate.

In Fig. 4 a resilient washer is shown at 19 engaged on the screw at the back of the shank portions of the covers and compressed by the screw against the face of the plate, thus to yieldingly tension and hold the covers in their particular positions of adjustment, either closed over or uncovering the receptacles.

Additionally, the covers may be tensioned over the outlets by turning the mounting screw 12 tightly in its seat, thus to force the covers into frictional engagement with the outer faces of the outlet receptacles.

The covers may be of metal or of insulating material and in either event, somewhat flexible and resilient, such resiliency adding to the holding effect described. Further, one of the covers is shown as having a bend 20 in the shank of the same to position the shutter portion of the same in substantial alignment with the other cover and this bend may be such as to additionally tension the blade against the face of the receptacle.

In Figs. 5 and 6 the blades or shutters are shown partly sectioned to indicate these made of insulating material. Such material may be hard insulating fiber, plastic or other sheet material. This sheet material may be quite thin and inexpensive and it may be colored or otherwise treated or finished to add a certain amount of ornamental effect to the face plate.

In Fig. 5, the blades are shown pivotally connected together by a tubular rivet 21 having an opening large enough to pass the mounting

screw 12. This construction has the same advantages that the first form illustrated has in that the guard may be sold as a separate item ready to be mounted on any ordinary face plate, using the face plate securing screw, or possibly one slightly longer for mounting the guard as well as the face plate in place.

Fig. 6 illustrates another form of the invention in which the covers 15, 16 are permanently attached directly to the face plate by a tubular rivet 22 engaged in the central screw opening in the face plate and of a size to pass the screw provided for mounting the base plate.

In the closed position shown in Fig. 3 the two blades effectively cover the outlet receptacles and they are yieldingly retained in that position by reason of their own resiliency and by the tension applied by the screw 12.

In Fig. 1 both covers 15 and 16 are shown swung to the side to fully uncover and expose both outlet receptacles. Fig. 2 shows how when only one receptacle is to be used, one cover only need be opened, leaving the other cover in position protecting the receptacle which is not in use. In this particular case an attachment plug 23 is shown engaged in the upper receptacle and the lower receptacle is closed against accidental contacting or tampering.

The rubber washer provided to tension and hold the receptacle covers may be utilized also to secure the mounting screw. For such purpose these washers may be simply pierced instead of being punched with a full size screw opening. The screw then is frictionally held and gripped by the washer and this holding effect on the screw is increased by the compression of the washer when the screw is turned all the way in.

To automatically center and releasably retain the covers in position over the receptacle outlets, these covers may be provided with lugs 24, Figs. 6 and 7, on the back of the same, notched as at 25 to receive, or in spaced pairs to engage over, the opposite slopes of the insulating ridges 26 which

separate the plate openings 17. The inherent resiliency of the covers enable them to snap into centered position over the outlets and permit them to be released and shifted away from their centered positions over the outlets.

This feature of releasably locking the covers in place over the outlets is important, in preventing the covers from shifting by vibration or other disturbing forces and in discouraging tampering with these closures.

What is claimed is:

A safety guard for a duplex electric outlet having outlet receptacles in adjoining relation and provided with barrier ridges between attachment blade openings and comprising outlet receptacle covers of flat, flexible material pivotally supported on a common center located between the adjoining receptacles and including resilient means for yieldingly retaining the individual covers in positions covering or uncovering the respective receptacles and said covers having lugs on the back of the same spaced to ride over and interlockingly engage with opposite sides of said barrier ridges.

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