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(72) Inventor; and

(71) Applicant : SUTEERAWANIT, Nick [US/US]; 1600 N. Hobart Blvd. #1, Los Angeles, California 90027 (US).

(74) Agent: PRINCE, Kevin; 32861 Calle Perfecto #A, San Juan Capistrano, California 92675 (US).

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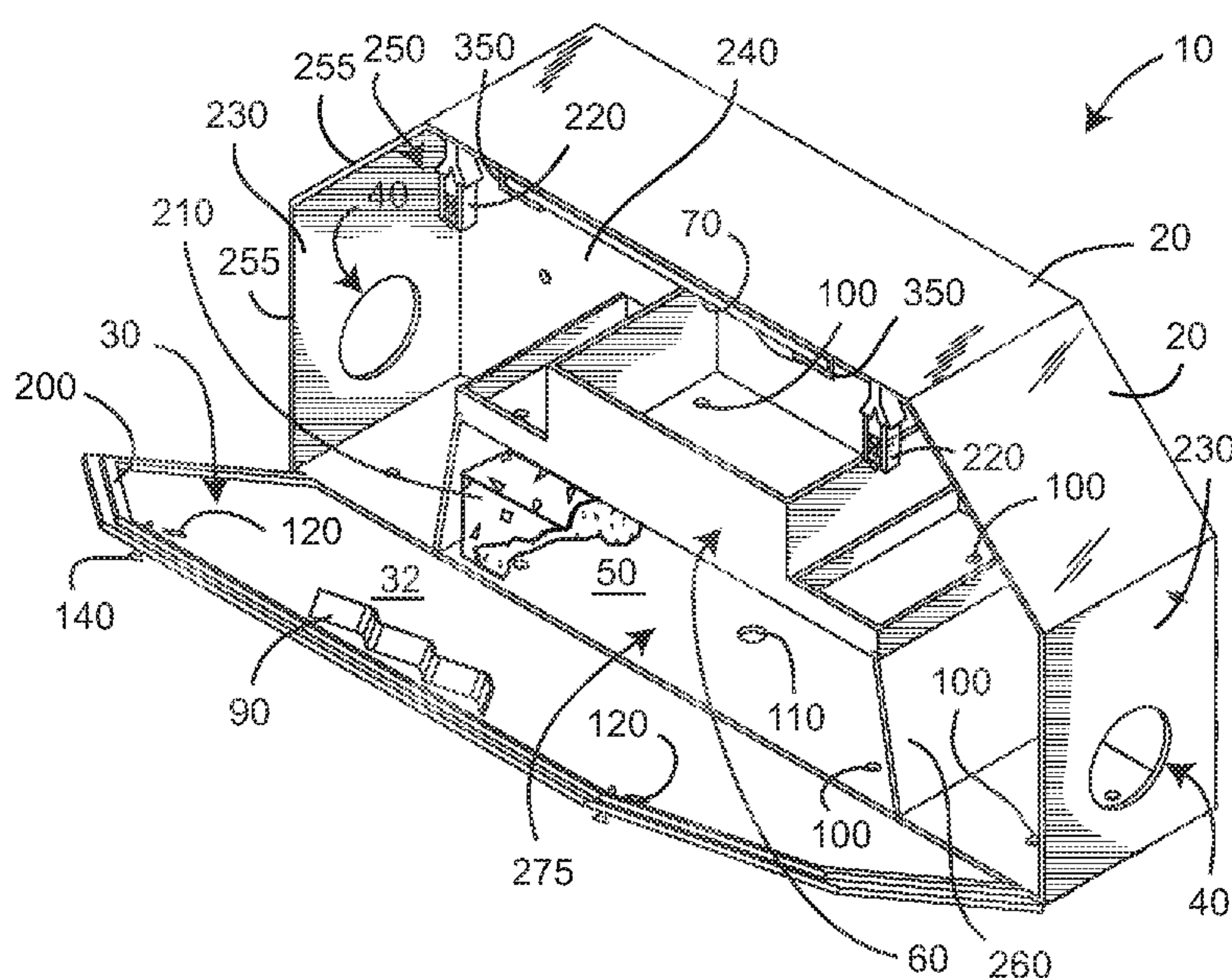
(54) Title: BAIT STATION

FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: A rodent bait station for placing on a ground surface, and optionally also up against a wall surface, is disclosed. An enclosure has a pair of side walls that each have a rodent aperture therein, a bottom wall, at least one top wall, a rear wall, and an open front side. The bottom wall includes a plurality of drain apertures therein. A front cover is adapted for sealing the open front side of the enclosure and is fixed to the bottom wall of the enclosure with a living hinge. A rigid bait platform is contained within the enclosure and comprises a pair of risers supporting a mezzanine and defining an anchor space therebetween for receiving a brick or other suitably weighted object. The mezzanine includes a bait receptacle thereon. A pair of insecticide trays and snail bait trays may be included.

1 **TITLE: BAIT STATION**

2
3 **INVENTOR: NICK SUTEERAWANIT**

4
5 **CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

6
7 This application claims the benefit of US Provisional Patent Application 61/438,941,
8 filed on 02/02/2011, and US Non-Provisional Utility Patent Application 13/356,279,
9 filed on 01/23/2012, both incorporated herein by reference.

10
11
12 **FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

13
14 This invention relates to rodent traps, and more particularly to a rodent bait station.

15
16
17 **DISCUSSION OF RELATED ART**

18
19 Rodent bait stations of the prior art suffer from several important drawbacks.
20 Namely, many such prior art bait stations allow water entering the enclosure to
21 contact the bait, thereby ruining the bait. Such prior art bait stations do not facilitate
22 the draining of such water therefrom. Further, prior art bait stations make no
23 provision for eliminating snails, slugs, crickets, and other insects before such can soil
24 the rodent bait, making it less attractive to rodents. Prior art bait stations are not
25 easily anchored in place, and do not provide sufficient gripping points for adhesives

1 when used therewith. Such prior art stations are not thermally insulated to keep
2 rodent bait from drying out and flaking off of suspension rods that hold such bait in an
3 attractive position for rodents. Further, such prior art stations have covers fixed with
4 a living hinge to an enclosure that, after repeated use, become worn and fail.

5
6 Therefore, there is a need for a device that prevents water from entering the enclosure
7 in a way that will ruin the rodent bait used therein, and that will provide ample
8 drainage for any water that does enter the enclosure. The needed device would
9 facilitate anchoring thereof in several versatile configurations, and would provide
10 means for preventing insects, snails, and other vermin from contacting and soiling the
11 rodent bait. The needed invention would be durable and the cover of such a device
12 would include a robust living hinge. The present invention accomplishes these
13 objectives.

14 15 16 **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

17
18 The present device is a rodent bait station for placing on a ground surface, and
19 optionally also up against a wall surface. An enclosure has a pair of side walls that
20 each have a rodent aperture therein, a bottom wall, at last one top wall, a rear wall,
21 and an open front side. The bottom wall includes a plurality of drain apertures
22 therein, each further including a selectively removable protective cover, such that
23 adhesive applied to the bottom wall does not occlude the drain aperture. The
24 enclosure may further include a cement board attached to the outside of the bottom

1 wall allowing the rodent bait station to be attached to the ground surface using a
2 mortar type material.

3
4 A front cover is adapted for sealing the open front side of the enclosure. Preferably
5 the front cover is fixed to the bottom wall of the enclosure with a living hinge. The
6 enclosure includes at least one cover locking mechanism cooperative with the cover to
7 secure the cover over the open front side of the enclosure.

8
9 A rigid bait platform is contained within the enclosure and comprises a pair of risers
10 supporting a mezzanine and defining an anchor space therebetween for receiving a
11 brick or other suitably weighted object. The mezzanine includes a bait receptacle
12 thereon.

13
14 In one embodiment, a bait hanging mechanism comprises a first bracket fixed to the
15 rear wall between the mezzanine and the at least one top wall. The bait hanging
16 mechanism further includes a second bracket fixed to the front cover, and at least one
17 bait hanging rod selectively positionable on the first and second brackets, whereby
18 bait dropping from the bait hanging rod falls into the bait receptacle.

19
20 A pair of insecticide trays may be formed on the mezzanine on opposing sides of the
21 bait receptacle for filling with a suitable insecticide for keeping crickets and other
22 insects from accessing and spoiling the rodent bait. Similarly, a pair of snail bait trays
23 may be formed on the bottom wall between each side wall and riser for filling with a
24 suitable mollusk poison for keeping snails and slugs from accessing and spoiling the
25 rodent bait.

1
2 In use, with rodent bait placed into the bait receptacle or onto the bait hanging rod, a
3 rodent may enter the enclosure through one of the side walls thereof, climb up one of
4 the risers and onto the mezzanine to access the rodent bait. The poisoned rodent may
5 then crawl down the other side of the mezzanine and riser to exit the enclosure at the
6 opposing side rodent aperture.

7
8 The present invention is a rodent bait station that prevents water from entering the
9 enclosure in a way that will ruin the rodent bait used therein. The present device
10 provides ample drainage for any water that does enter the enclosure. The present
11 invention facilitates anchoring of the bait station in several versatile configurations,
12 and provides means for preventing insects, snails, and other vermin from contacting
13 and soiling the rodent bait. The present invention is durable and the cover of such a
14 device includes a robust double living hinge. Other features and advantages of the
15 present invention will become apparent from the following more detailed description,
16 taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, which illustrate, by way of
17 example, the principles of the invention.

18
19
20 **DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

21
22 FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a rodent bait station of the invention, illustrated with a
23 door in a partially opened position;

24 FIG. 2 is a top view of FIG. 1;

25 FIG. 3 is a bottom view of FIG. 1;

1 FIG. 4 is a front view of FIG. 1;

2 FIG. 5 is a side elevation view of FIG. 1;

3 FIG. 6 is a rear elevation view of FIG. 1;

4 FIG. 7 is an exploded view of the invention.

5 FIG. 8 is an enlarged perspective view of a lock access hole cover and pivot, taken

6 generally along path 8--8 of FIG. 7 ;

7 FIG. 9 is a perspective view of bracket and a bait hanging rod, taken generally along

8 path 9--9 of FIG. 7;

9 FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a rodent attractant tray and a first bracket, taken

10 generally along path 10--10 of FIG. 7;

11 FIG. 11 is a perspective view of a protective cover, taken generally along path 11--11

12 of FIG. 7;

13 FIG. 12 is a front elevation view of a second preferred embodiment rodent bait station

14 illustrated with the front cover removed for clarity of illustration;

15 FIG. 13 is side elevation view of the embodiment of FIG. 12;

16 FIG. 14 is a partial view of a double living hinge of the cover, taken generally along

17 lines 14--14 of FIG. 5; and

18 FIG. 15 is a front elevation view of a rodent bait station illustrated with a cement

19 board attached to a ground surface using mortar.

20
21
22 **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT**

23
24 Illustrative embodiments of the invention are described below. The following

25 explanation provides specific details for a thorough understanding of and enabling

1 description for these embodiments. One skilled in the art will understand that the
2 invention may be practiced without such details. In other instances, well-known
3 structures and functions have not been shown or described in detail to avoid
4 unnecessarily obscuring the description of the embodiments.

5
6 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, throughout the description and the
7 claims, the words “comprise,” “comprising,” and the like are to be construed in an
8 inclusive sense as opposed to an exclusive or exhaustive sense; that is to say, in the
9 sense of “including, but not limited to.” Words using the singular or plural number
10 also include the plural or singular number respectively. Additionally, the words
11 “herein,” “above,” “below” and words of similar import, when used in this
12 application, shall refer to this application as a whole and not to any particular portions
13 of this application. When the claims use the word “or” in reference to a list of two or
14 more items, that word covers all of the following interpretations of the word: any of
15 the items in the list, all of the items in the list and any combination of the items in the
16 list.

17
18 FIGS. 1 and 7 illustrate a rodent bait station 10 for placing on a ground surface 15,
19 and optionally also up against a wall surface 16 (FIG. 13). An enclosure 20 has a pair
20 of side walls 230 that each have a rodent aperture 40 therein (FIGS. 1 and 5), a
21 bottom wall 50, at least one top wall 20, a rear wall 240, and an open front side 250
22 (FIG. 7). The bottom wall 50 includes a plurality of drain apertures 100 (FIG. 7)
23 therein so that water entering the enclosure 20 may drain therethrough. The rear wall
24 240 may include a rodent attractant tray 150 (FIG. 10) projecting into the enclosure
25 20 for retaining a rodent attractant (not shown) therein. An anchor aperture 110 may

1 be further included through the bottom wall 50 of the enclosure 20, the anchor
2 aperture 110 being of a larger diameter than any of the drain apertures 100 for
3 receiving a mechanical anchor (not shown) for anchoring the bait station 10 onto a
4 dirt or grass ground surface 15.

5
6 Each drain aperture 100 may further include a selectively removable protective
7 arcuate cover 180 (FIGS. 7 and 11), such that adhesive applied to the bottom wall 50
8 does not occlude each drain aperture 100. As such, water may drain through each
9 drain aperture 100 and through the protective cover 180.

10
11 The bottom wall 50 and rear wall 240 may each include a plurality of T-shaped
12 standoffs 170 projecting away therefrom outside of the enclosure 20, such that
13 adhesive applied to the bottom wall 50 and side wall 240 may form strong, permanent
14 bonds therewith (FIGS. 7, 12, and 13). Also, the plurality of T-shaped standoffs 170
15 acts to keep adhesive applied to the bottom wall 50 from occluding each drain
16 aperture 100. Furthermore, the plurality of T-shaped standoffs 170 also acts to keep
17 adhesive applied to side walls 230 from occluding ventilation apertures 160.

18
19 In another embodiment, the rodent bait station 10 may further include a cement board
20 400 (FIG. 15) attached to the bottom wall 50 outside of the enclosure 20. Preferably,
21 the cement board 400 has the approximate same width and length of the bottom wall
22 50. The cement board 400 may be attached to the enclosure 20 using at least one
23 screw and nut set 405 (FIG. 15) via the anchor aperture 110, though other appropriate
24 attachment methods may be used. In one embodiment, the cement board 400 may be
25 secured to the ground surface 15 using mortar 410 (FIG. 15), though other suitable

1 materials may be used. Preferably, a thinset mortar is used to secure the rodent bait
2 station 10 to the ground surface 15.

3
4 The side walls 230 may further include ventilation apertures 160 (FIGS. 12--13) to
5 allow hot air inside the enclosure 20 to escape therethrough. Further in FIGS. 1 and
6 12, each of the at least one top wall 20 includes a pair of opposing insulator panel
7 slots 350, such that an insulator panel 70 may be slidably retained therein to insulate
8 the inside of the enclosure 20 from ambient heat, such as caused by sunlight exposure
9 on the at least one top wall 20.

10
11 In FIGS. 1 and 7, a front cover 30 is adapted for sealing the open front side 250 of the
12 enclosure 20. Preferably the front cover 30 is fixed at a lower edge 31 (FIG. 5)
13 thereof to the bottom wall 50 of the enclosure 20 with a living hinge 340 (FIG. 14),
14 and preferably a double living hinge 342 (FIG. 14). The cover 30 includes an outside
15 surface 34 and an inside surface 32 (FIGS. 2--5). Preferably the enclosure 20 and
16 cover 30 are integrally formed from injection molded plastic materials, for example.

17
18 In one embodiment illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 12, the enclosure 20 includes at least
19 one cover locking mechanism 220 cooperative with the cover 30 to secure the cover
20 30 over the open front side 250 of the enclosure 20. Preferably a portion 200 (FIG. 1)
21 of the cover 30 interlocks with a front edge 255 (FIG. 1) of the enclosure 20 to create
22 a water resistant seal. Each cover locking mechanism 220 preferably includes an
23 aperture 120 (FIGS. 1 and 4) through which a key or other particularly-shaped object
24 (not shown) may be inserted to release the cover locking mechanism 220 to free the
25 cover 30 from the enclosure 20. A cover 130 on a pivot screw 140 (FIGS. 7 and 8)

1 may be included to cover each aperture 120 to prevent rain from entering the
2 enclosure therethrough.

3
4 In FIGS. 1 and 12, a rigid bait platform 60 is contained within the enclosure 20 and
5 comprises a pair of risers 260 supporting a mezzanine 270 and defining an anchor
6 space 275 therebetween for receiving a brick 210 or other suitable weighty object,
7 such as a concrete block or metal ingot. In FIGS. 1 and 7, the risers 260 and the
8 mezzanine 270 extend from the rear wall 240 to the open front side 250 so as to
9 isolate the anchor space 275 from the rest of the space within the enclosure 20 when
10 the cover 30 is sealed over the front side 250 of the enclosure 20. The mezzanine
11 includes a bait receptacle 280 (FIG. 7) thereon. The bait platform 60 may be made
12 from a rigid plastic material, and is preferably integrally formed with the enclosure 20
13 and the cover 30.

14
15 In one embodiment in FIG. 7, a bait hanging mechanism 290 (FIG. 12) comprises a
16 first bracket 155 (FIG. 10) fixed to the rear wall 240 between the mezzanine 270 and
17 the at least one top wall 20. The bait hanging mechanism 290 further includes a
18 second bracket 90 (FIG. 9) fixed to the front cover 30, and at least one bait hanging
19 rod 300 (FIG. 9) selectively positionable on the first and second brackets 155,90,
20 whereby bait 18 dropping from the bait hanging rod 300 falls into the bait receptacle
21 280. Such a bait 18 may be similar to that sold under the brand name Contrac Blox,
22 manufactured by Bell Laboratories, Inc. of Madison, Wisconsin, for example. The
23 bait receptacle 280 may also be filled partially with a suitable tracking powder (not
24 shown), such as that sold by Bell Laboratories, Inc. of Madison, Wisconsin, under the
25 brand name Ditrac.

1
2 In FIGS. 1 and 7, a pair of insecticide trays 310 may be formed on the mezzanine 270
3 on opposing sides of the bait receptacle 280. Such insecticide trays 310 may be filled
4 with a suitable insecticide (not shown) for keeping crickets and other insects from
5 accessing and spoiling the rodent bait 18. Similarly, a pair of snail bait trays 320
6 (FIG. 12) may be formed on the bottom wall 50 between each side wall 230 and riser
7 260. Such snail bait trays 320 may be filled with a suitable mollusk poison for
8 keeping snails and slugs from accessing and spoiling the rodent bait 18. A copper
9 ring 330 (FIG. 13) may further be included, fixed around each rodent aperture 40 to
10 inhibit snails and slugs from entering the enclosure 20.

11
12 In one embodiment the at least one top wall 20 includes exactly two top walls 20
13 fixed at a top central point 370, each of the two top walls 20 sloping downwardly to
14 overhang one of the side walls 240 (FIGS. 12 and 13). Alternately, the at least one
15 top wall 20 includes exactly three top walls 20, one of which is a top-most horizontal
16 top wall 380 (FIG. 7) fixed to each of the other two top walls 390 that each slope
17 down to one of the side walls 240 (FIGS. 1--7).

18
19 In use, with rodent bait 18 placed into the bait receptacle 280 or onto the bait hanging
20 rod 300, a rodent (not shown) may enter the enclosure 20 through one of the side
21 walls 230 thereof, climb up one of the risers 260 and onto the mezzanine 27 to access
22 the rodent bait 18. The rodent may then crawl down the other side of the mezzanine
23 270 and riser 260 to exit the enclosure 20 at the opposing side rodent aperture 40.

24

1 While a particular form of the invention has been illustrated and described, it will be
2 apparent that various modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and
3 scope of the invention. For example, an embodiment of the bait station 10 having two
4 top walls 20, and another embodiment having three of the top walls 20, are illustrated,
5 but other configurations could be devised. Accordingly, it is not intended that the
6 invention be limited, except as by the appended claims.

7
8 Particular terminology used when describing certain features or aspects of the
9 invention should not be taken to imply that the terminology is being redefined herein
10 to be restricted to any specific characteristics, features, or aspects of the invention
11 with which that terminology is associated. In general, the terms used in the following
12 claims should not be construed to limit the invention to the specific embodiments
13 disclosed in the specification, unless the above Detailed Description section explicitly
14 defines such terms. Accordingly, the actual scope of the invention encompasses not
15 only the disclosed embodiments, but also all equivalent ways of practicing or
16 implementing the invention.

17
18 The above detailed description of the embodiments of the invention is not intended to
19 be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise form disclosed above or to the
20 particular field of usage mentioned in this disclosure. While specific embodiments of,
21 and examples for, the invention are described above for illustrative purposes, various
22 equivalent modifications are possible within the scope of the invention, as those
23 skilled in the relevant art will recognize. Also, the teachings of the invention
24 provided herein can be applied to other systems, not necessarily the system described

1 above. The elements and acts of the various embodiments described above can be
2 combined to provide further embodiments.

3
4 All of the above patents and applications and other references, including any that may
5 be listed in accompanying filing papers, are incorporated herein by reference.

6 Aspects of the invention can be modified, if necessary, to employ the systems,
7 functions, and concepts of the various references described above to provide yet
8 further embodiments of the invention.

9
10 Changes can be made to the invention in light of the above "Detailed Description."

11 While the above description details certain embodiments of the invention and
12 describes the best mode contemplated, no matter how detailed the above appears in
13 text, the invention can be practiced in many ways. Therefore, implementation details
14 may vary considerably while still being encompassed by the invention disclosed
15 herein. As noted above, particular terminology used when describing certain features
16 or aspects of the invention should not be taken to imply that the terminology is being
17 redefined herein to be restricted to any specific characteristics, features, or aspects of
18 the invention with which that terminology is associated.

19
20 While certain aspects of the invention are presented below in certain claim forms, the
21 inventor contemplates the various aspects of the invention in any number of claim
22 forms. Accordingly, the inventor reserves the right to add additional claims after
23 filing the application to pursue such additional claim forms for other aspects of the
24 invention.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A rodent bait station for placing on a ground surface, comprising:

an enclosure having a pair of side walls each having a rodent aperture therein, a bottom wall, at least one top wall, a rear wall, and an open front side, the bottom wall including a plurality of drain apertures therein;

a front cover adapted for sealing the open front side of the enclosure, the enclosure including at least one cover locking mechanism cooperative with the cover to secure the cover over the open front side of the enclosure;

a bait platform contained within the enclosure and comprising a pair of risers supporting a mezzanine and defining an anchor space therebetween, the mezzanine including a bait receptacle thereon, the risers and the mezzanine extending from the rear wall to the open front side so as to isolate the anchor space from the rest of the space within the enclosure when the cover is sealed over the front side of the enclosure;

whereby with rodent bait placed into the bait receptacle on the mezzanine, a rodent may enter the enclosure through one of the side walls thereof, climb up one of the risers and onto the mezzanine to access the rodent bait, and then crawl down the other side of the mezzanine and riser to exit the enclosure at the opposing side rodent aperture, water introduced into the enclosure through either of the rodent apertures being free to drain through the plurality of drain holes in the bottom wall, the anchor

1 space adapted to receive a standard brick to anchor the enclosure on the ground
2 surface.

3
4 2. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including a bait hanging mechanism
5 comprising a first bracket fixed to the rear wall between the mezzanine and the at
6 least one top wall, and a second bracket fixed to the front cover, and at least one bait
7 hanging rod selectively positionable on the first and second brackets, whereby bait
8 dropping from the bait hanging rod falls into the bait receptacle.

9
10 3. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including a pair of cricket powder
11 insecticide trays formed on the mezzanine on opposing sides of the bait receptacle.

12
13 4. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including a rodent attractant tray formed
14 onto the rear wall and projecting into the enclosure, the rodent attractant tray adapted
15 to retain a rodent attractant therein.

16
17 5. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including a pair of slug and snail bait trays
18 formed on the bottom wall between each side wall and riser.

19
20 6. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including a copper ring fixed to the side
21 walls inside the enclosure around each rodent aperture.

22
23 7. The rodent bait station of claim 1 wherein the front cover is fixed at a lower edge
24 thereof to the bottom wall of the enclosure with a living hinge, the front cover and
25 enclosure being integrally formed.

1
2 8. The rodent bait station of claim 7 wherein the living hinge is a double living hinge.

3
4 9. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including T-shaped standoffs projecting
5 away from the bottom wall outside of the enclosure, whereby adhesive applied to the
6 bottom wall around each standoff may form a strong, permanent bond therewith.

7
8 10. The rodent bait station of claim 1 wherein each drain hole in the bottom wall
9 further includes a protective arcuate cover whereby adhesive applied to the bottom
10 wall does not occlude the drain hole, thereby allowing water inside the enclosure to
11 drain therethrough.

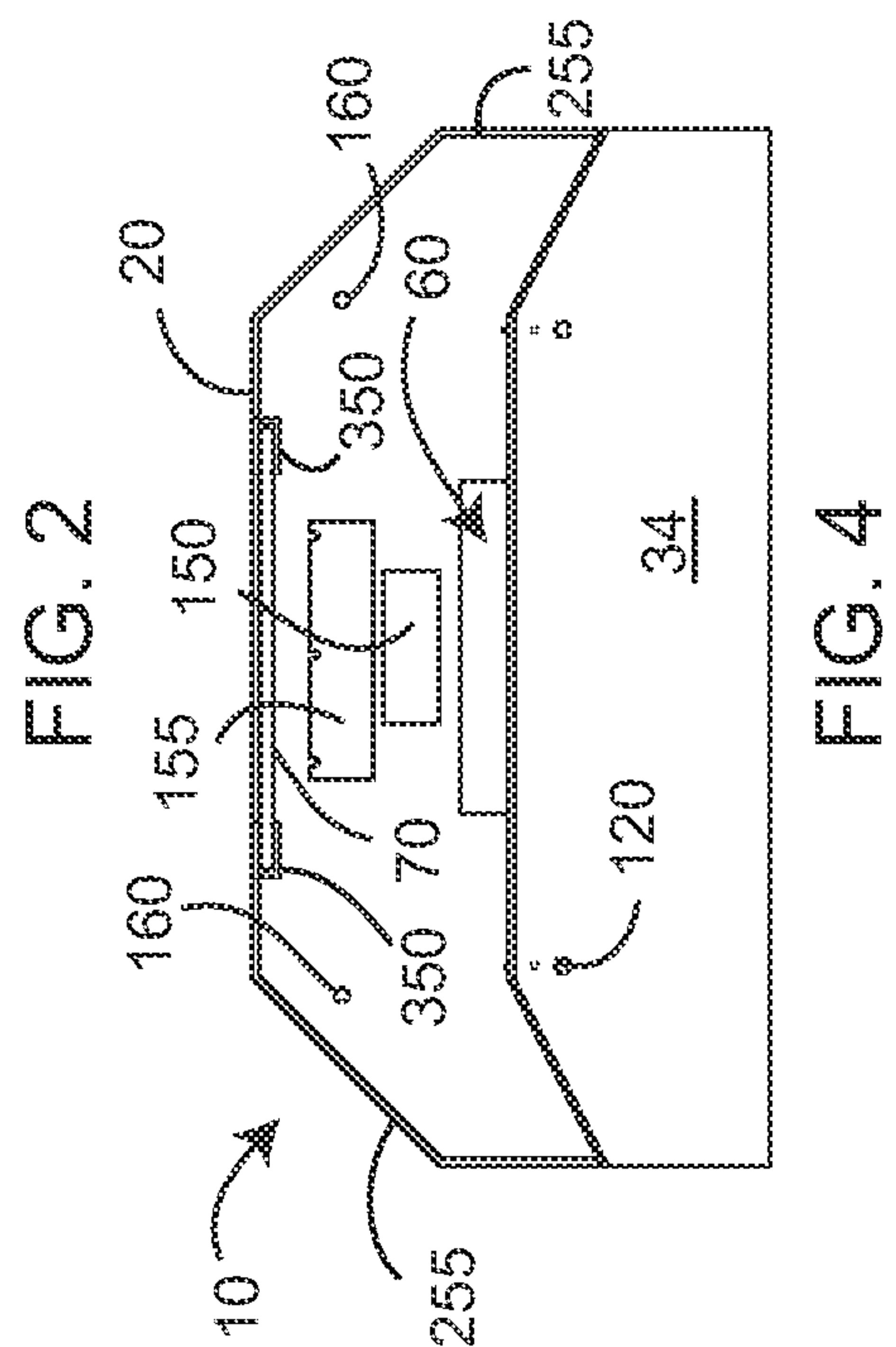
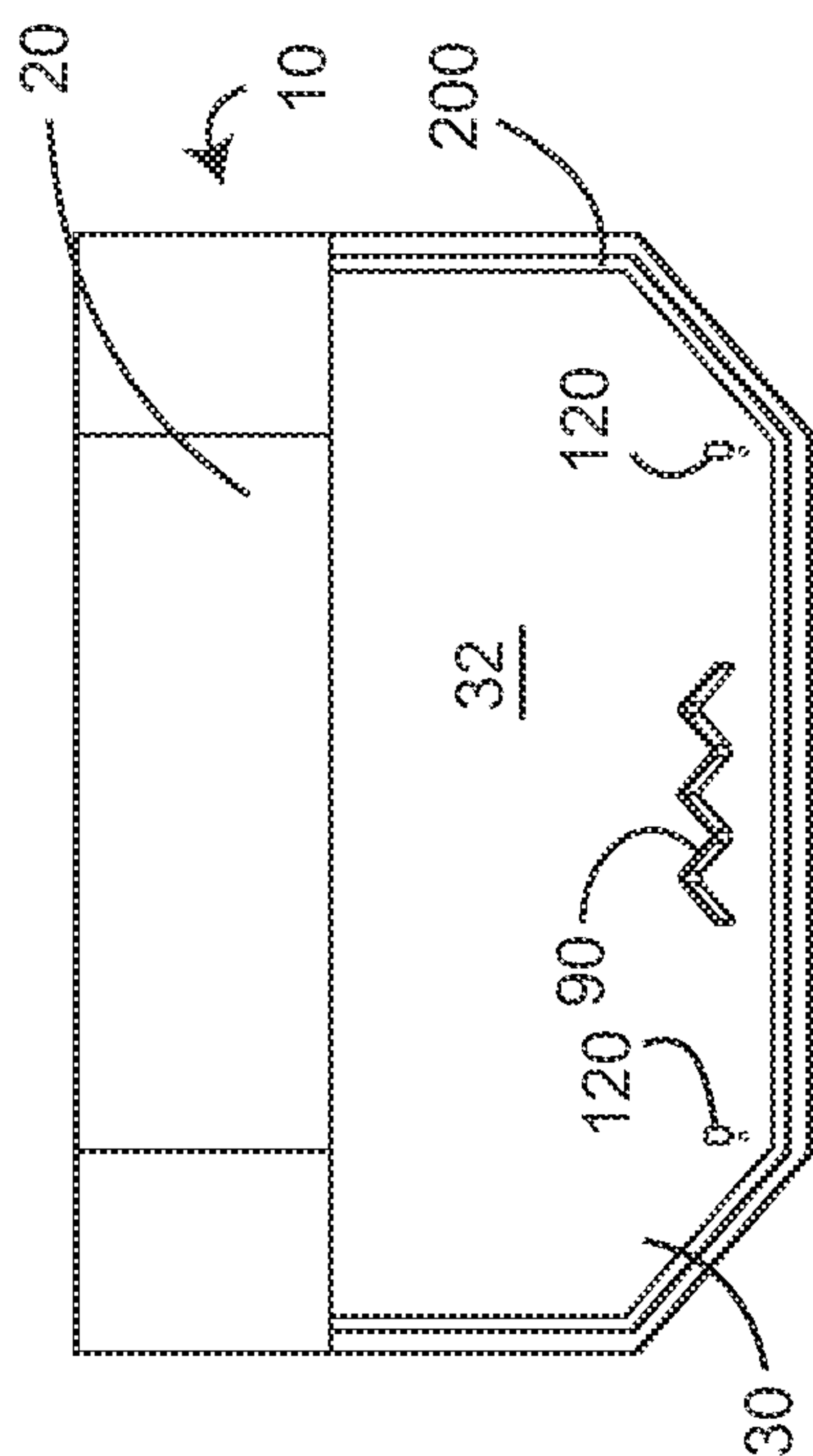
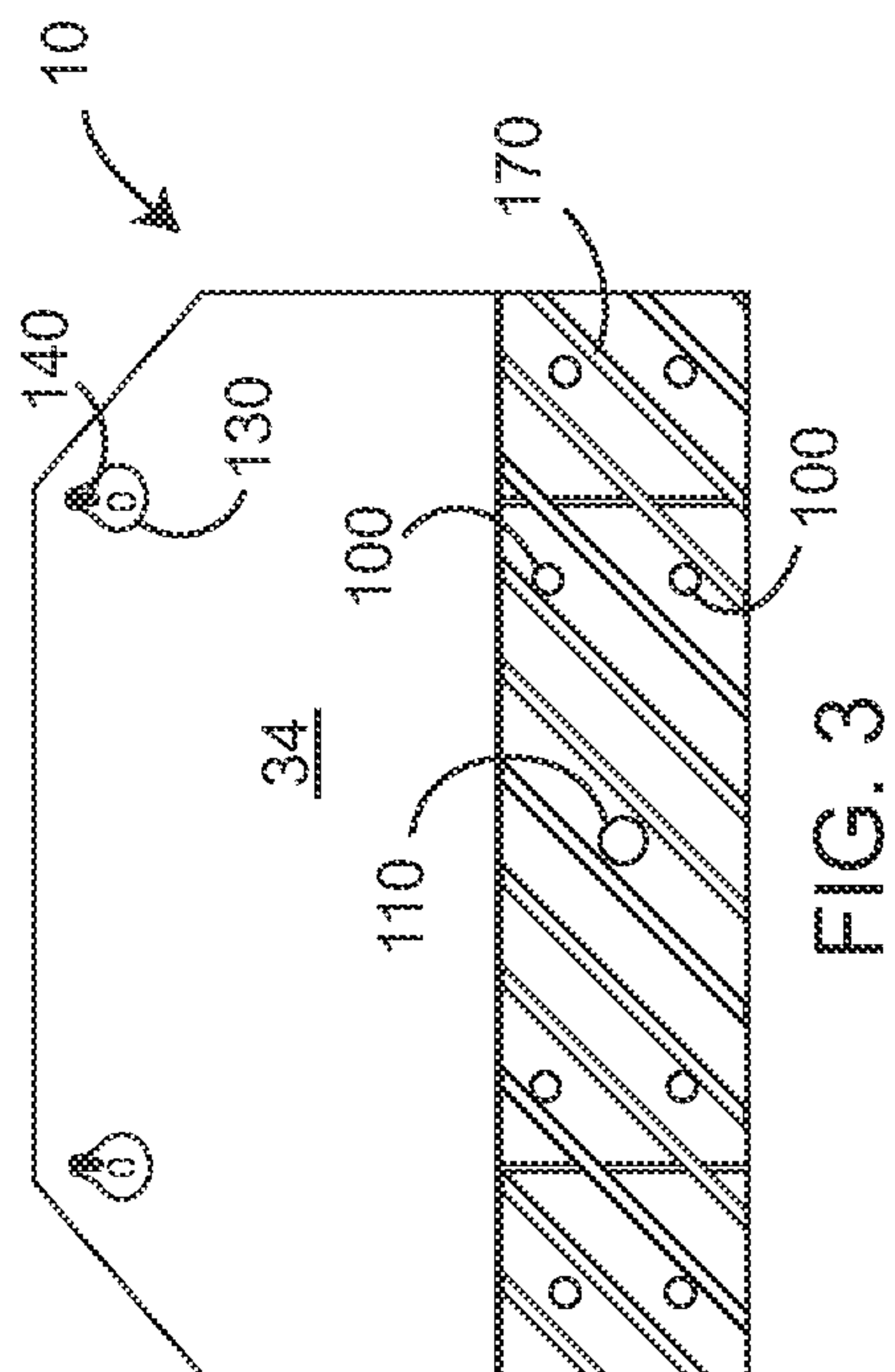
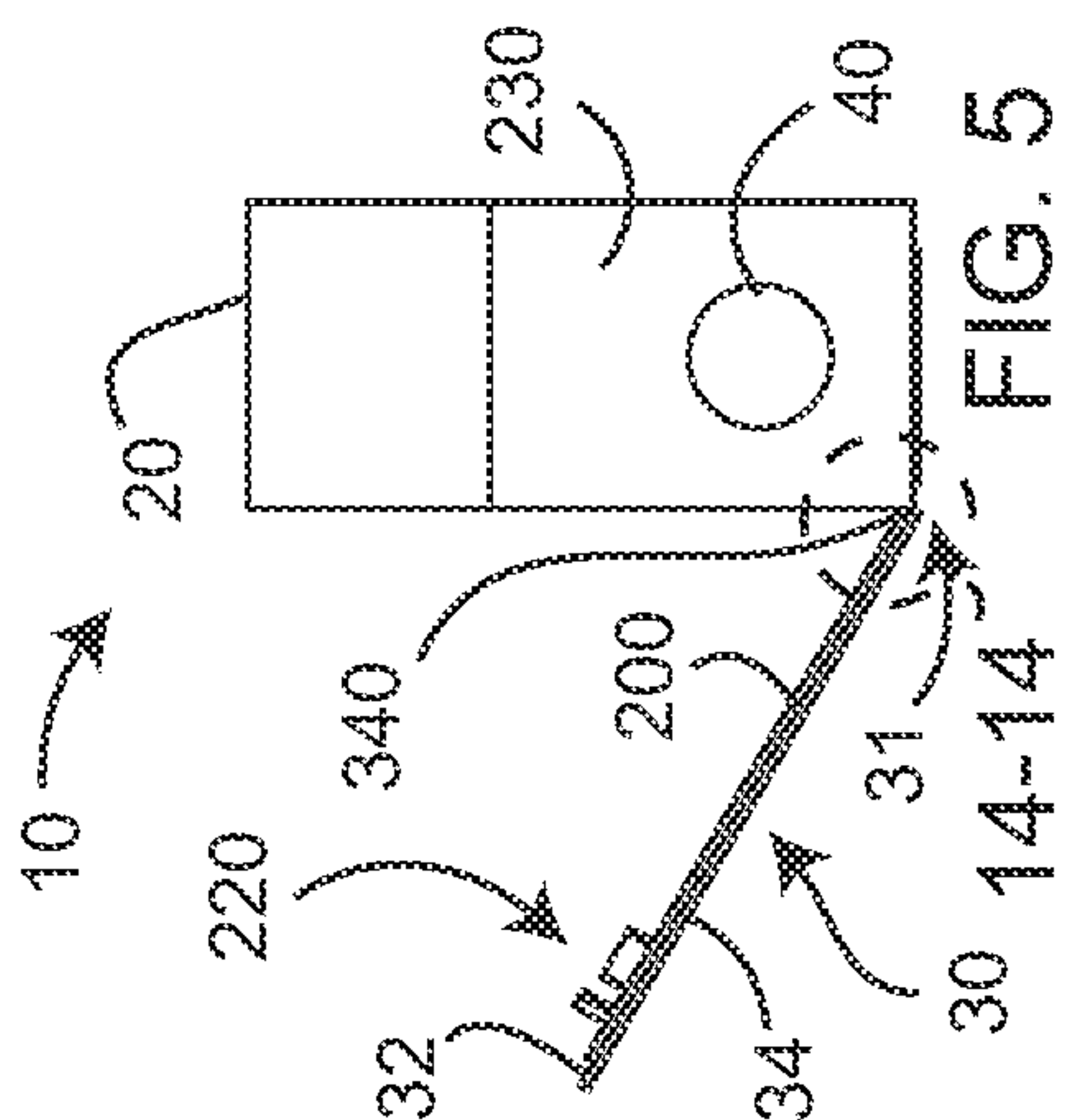
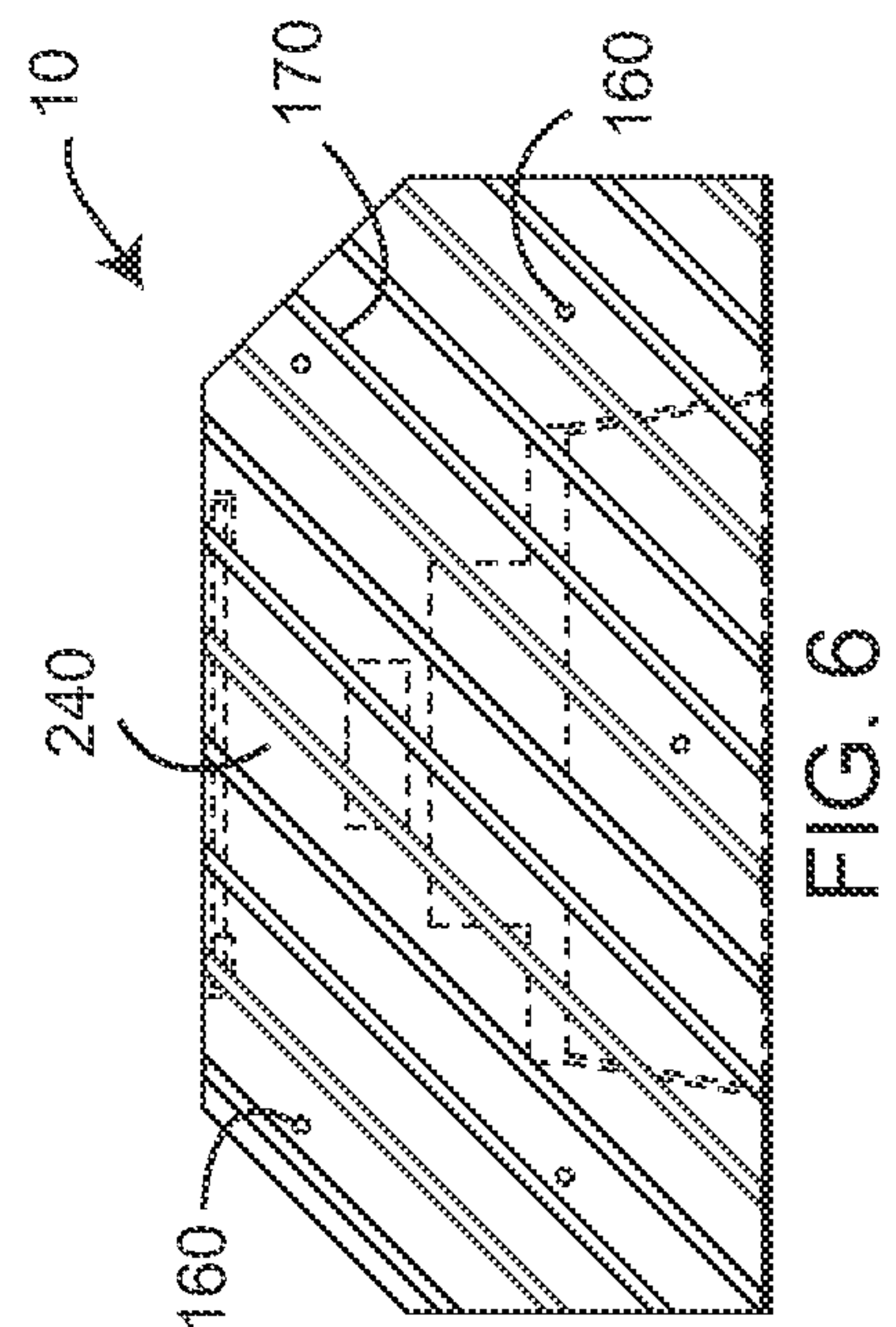
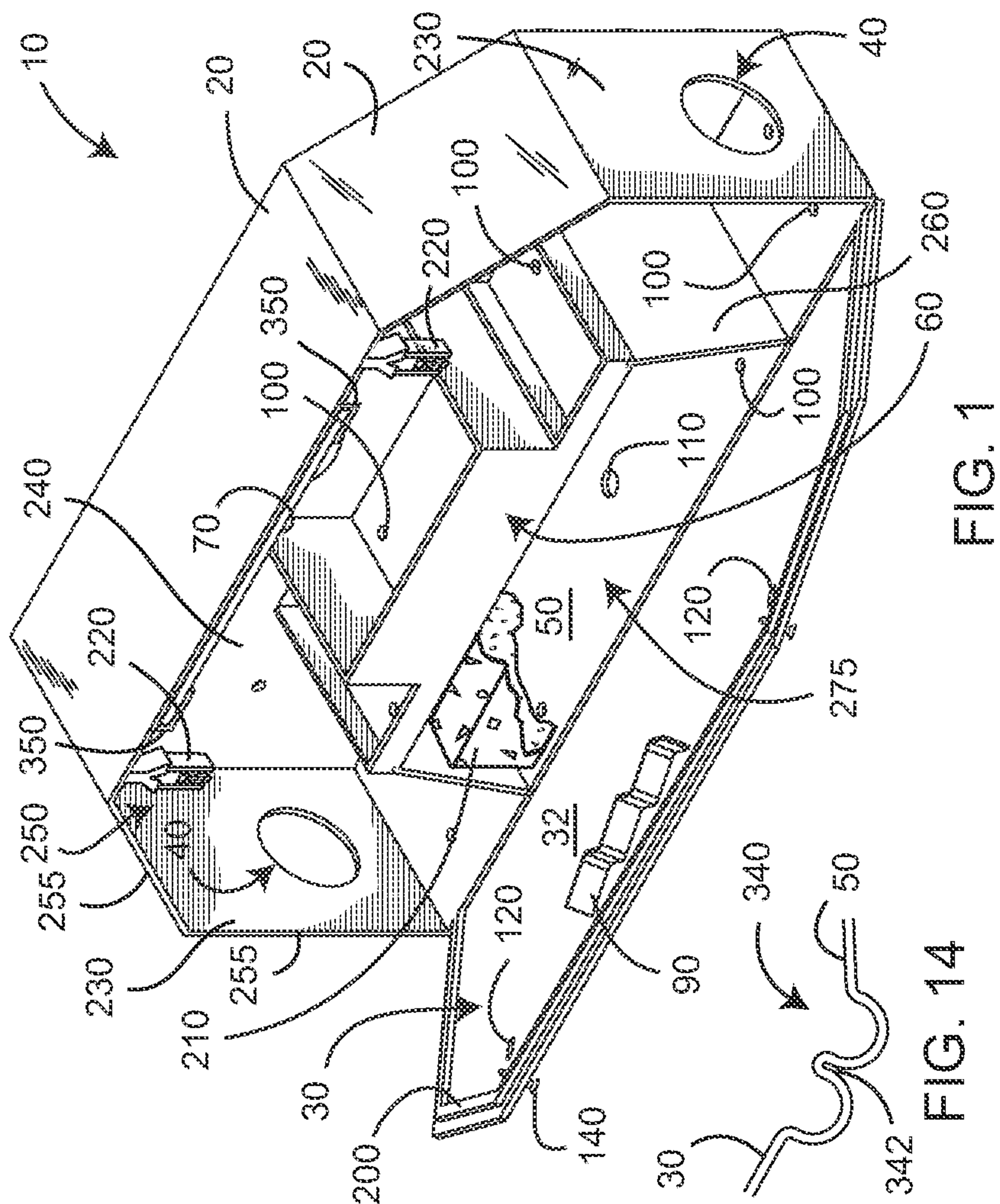
12
13 11. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including a plurality of ventilation
14 apertures in the side walls proximate the at least one top wall.

15
16 12. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including T-shaped standoffs projecting
17 away from the rear wall outside of the enclosure, whereby adhesive applied to the rear
18 wall around each standoff may form a strong, permanent bond therewith.

19
20 13. The rodent bait station of claim 1 wherein each of the at least one top wall
21 includes a pair of opposing insulator panel slots, whereby an insulator panel may be
22 retained therein to insulate the inside of the enclosure from ambient heat.

23

- 1 14. The rodent bait station of claim 1 wherein the at least one top wall includes
2 exactly two top walls fixed at a top central point with each sloping downwardly to
3 overhang one of the side walls.
4
- 5 15. The rodent bait station of claim 1 wherein the at least one top wall includes
6 exactly three top walls, one of which is a top-most horizontal top wall fixed to each of
7 the other two top walls that each slope down to one of the side walls.
8
- 9 16. The rodent bait station of claim 1 wherein the bait receptacle and each insecticide
10 tray further include drain holes therein, whereby water introduced into either the bait
11 receptacle or either of the two insecticide trays may drain into the anchor space, and
12 then from the anchor space drain to outside of the enclosure.
13
- 14 17. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including an anchor aperture in the
15 bottom wall of the enclosure, the anchor aperture being of a larger diameter than any
16 of the drain apertures.
17
- 18 18. The rodent bait station of claim 1 further including a cement board attached to the
19 bottom wall outside of the enclosure.
20
- 21 19. The rodent bait station of claim 18 wherein the cement board is secured to the
22 ground surface using mortar.
23



2/3

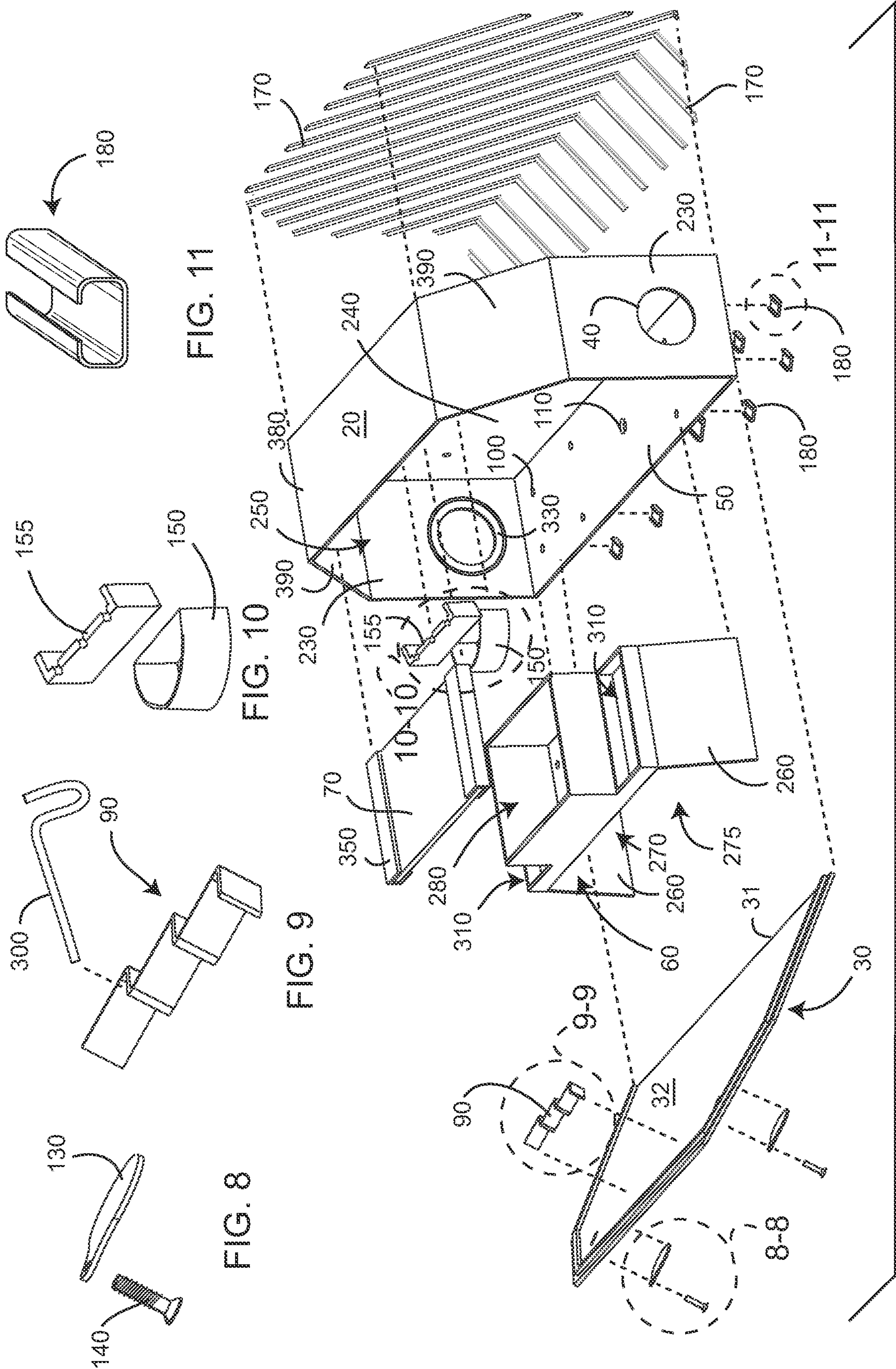
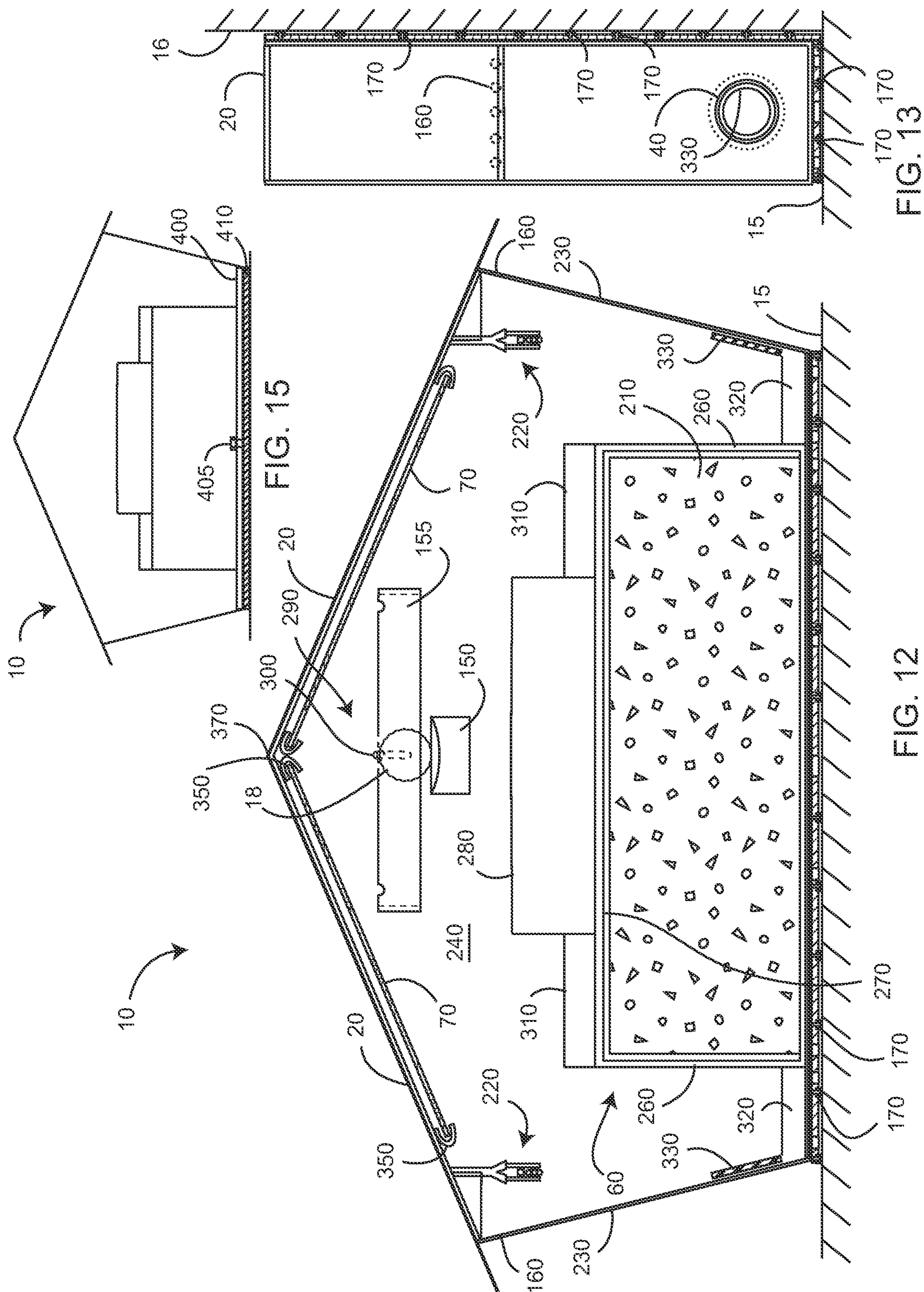


FIG. 7



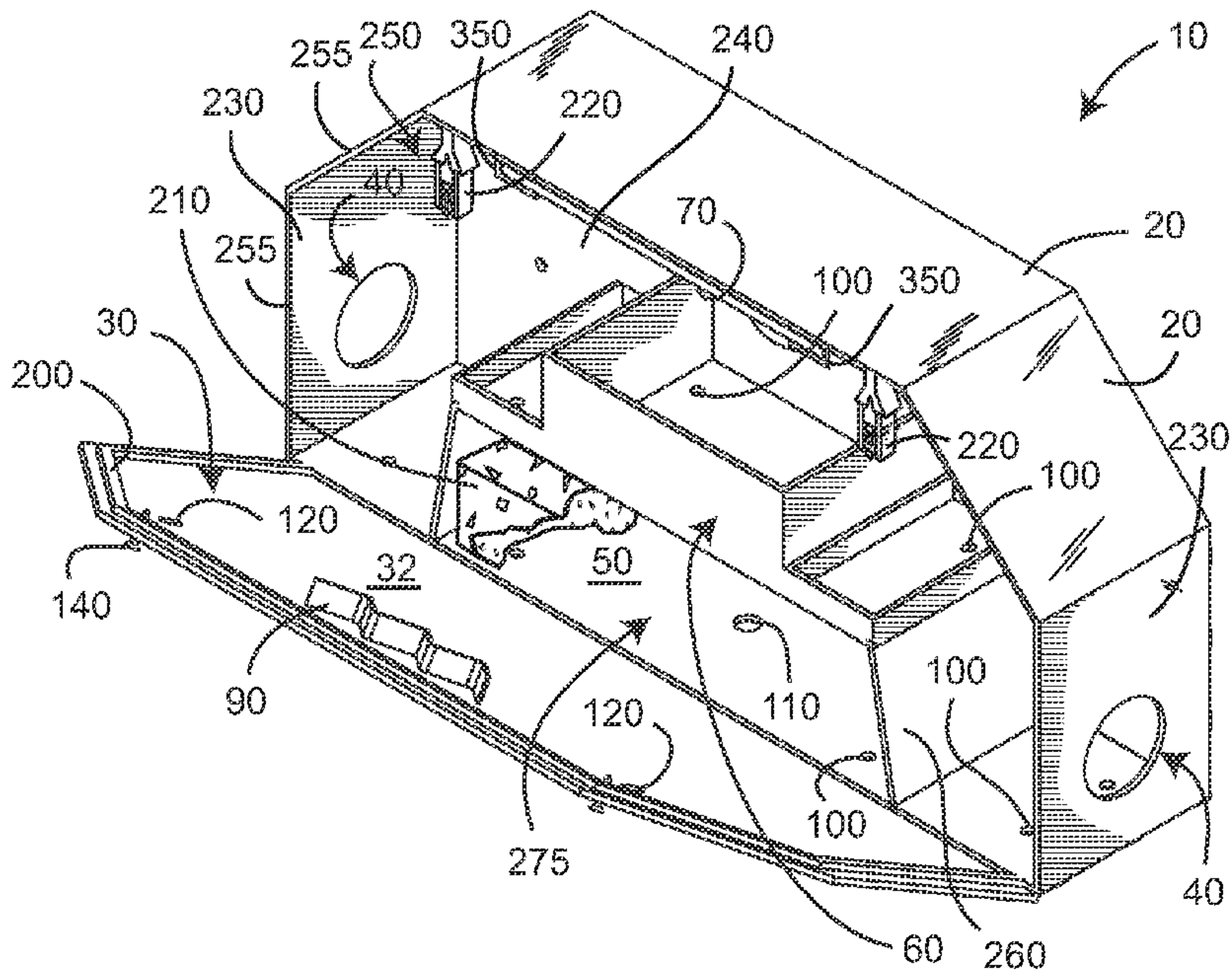


FIG. 1