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(54) HAND-HELD APPLICATOR

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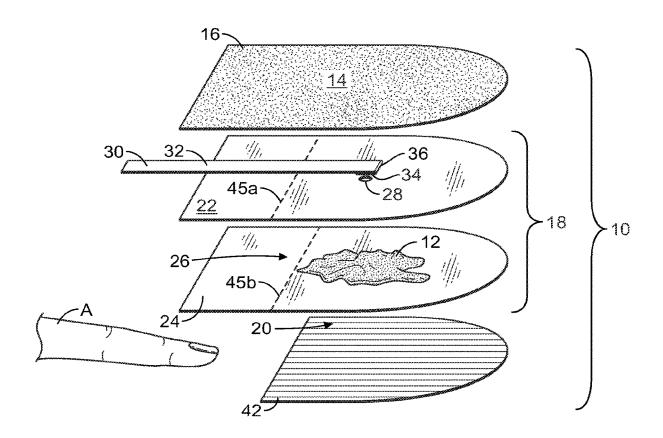
(51) Int. Cl.

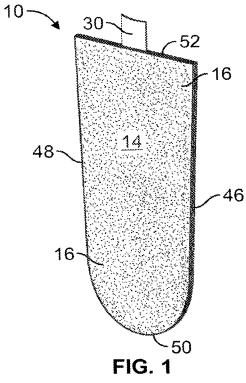
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(57)ABSTRACT

A hand-held applicator includes a first applicator layer adjacent a first reservoir and a finger-receiving space for securely holding the applicator. When the first applicator layer is external facing, the fill material is dispensed outside the applicator and when the first applicator layer faces into the finger receiving space the fill material is dispensed into the finger-receiving space and applied to the finger or fingers in the finger-receiving space. The applicator may further include a second applicator layer adjacent a second reservoir and opposite the first applicator layer and first reservoir to securely store and dispense a second amount of the fill material. Reservoir access layers separate the first applicator layer and first reservoir, and the second applicator layer and second reservoir and transform between a first, closed position where the fill material is securely stored in a reservoir and a second, open position where fill material is dispensed from a reservoir through an applicator layer.





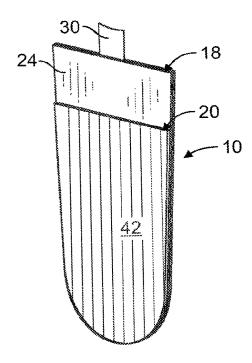
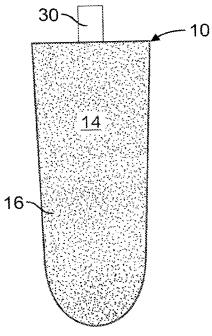


FIG. 2



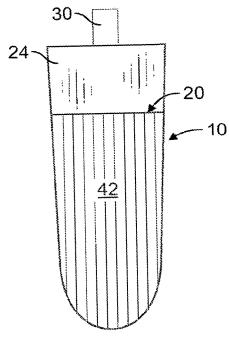


FIG. 3 FIG. 4

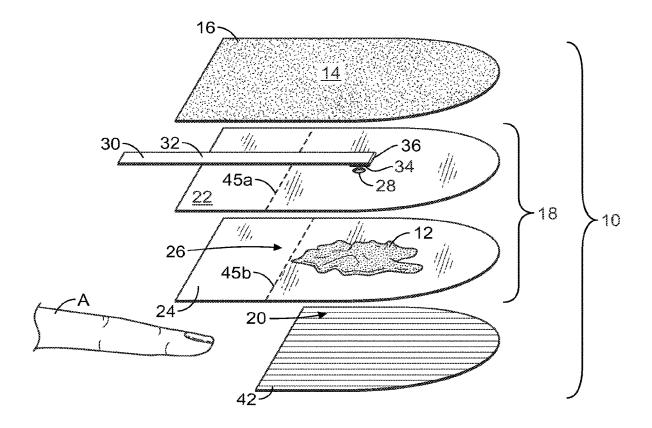
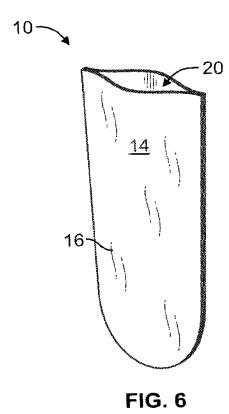
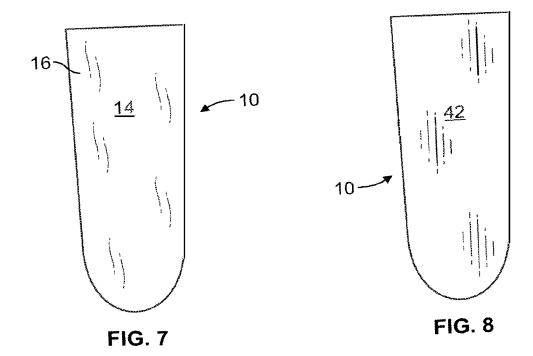


FIG. 5





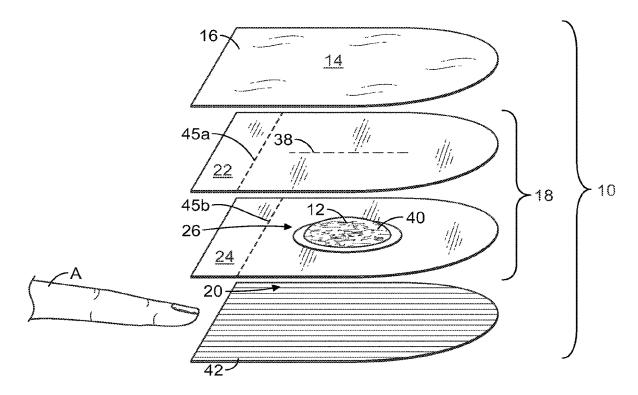


FIG. 9

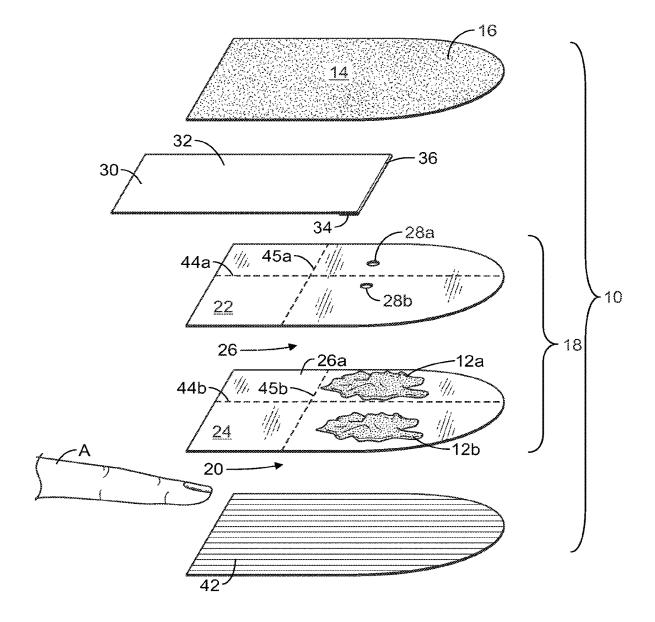


FIG. 10

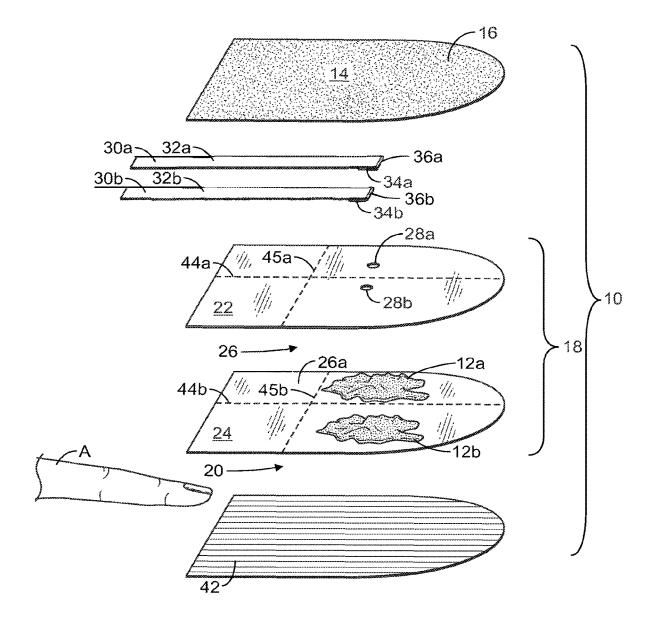


FIG. 11

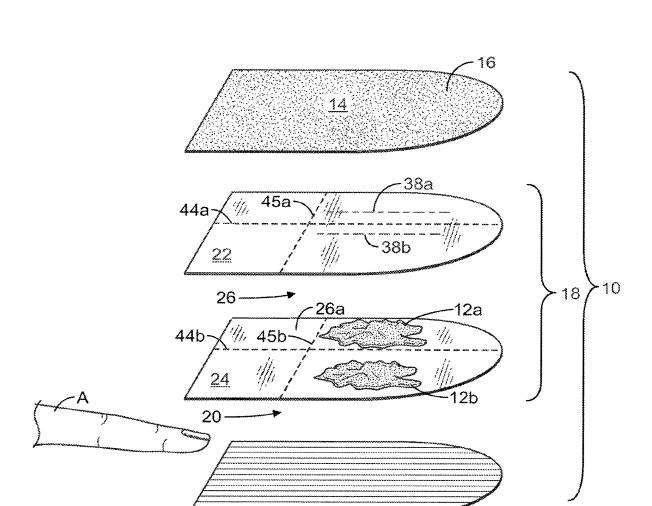


FIG. 12

50 FIG. 14

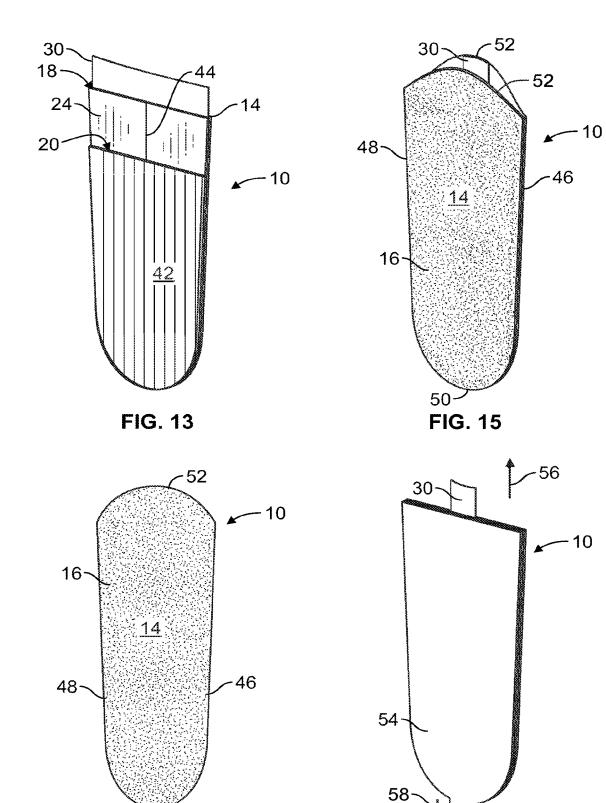


FIG. 17

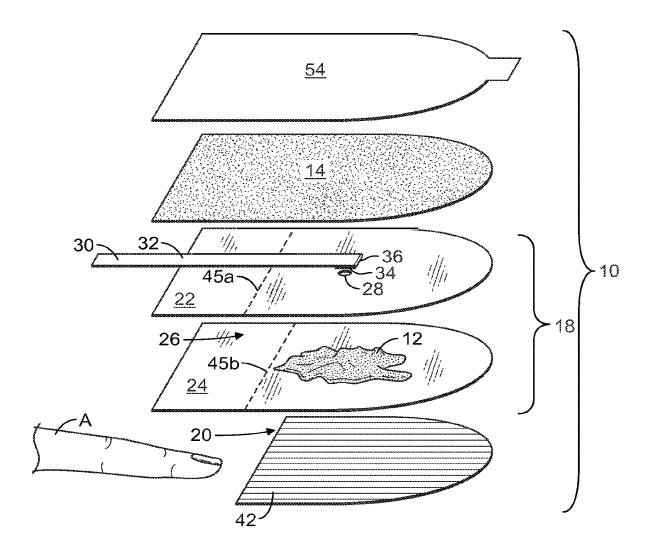


FIG. 16

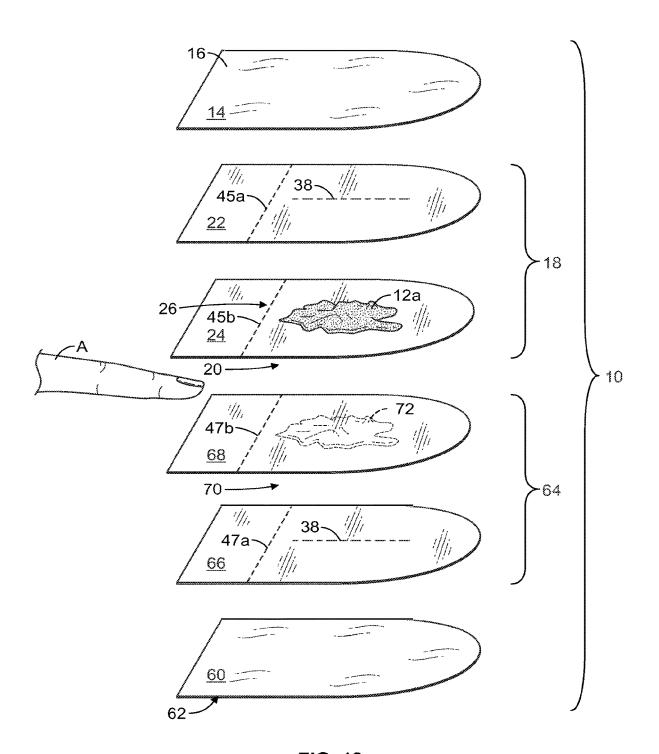
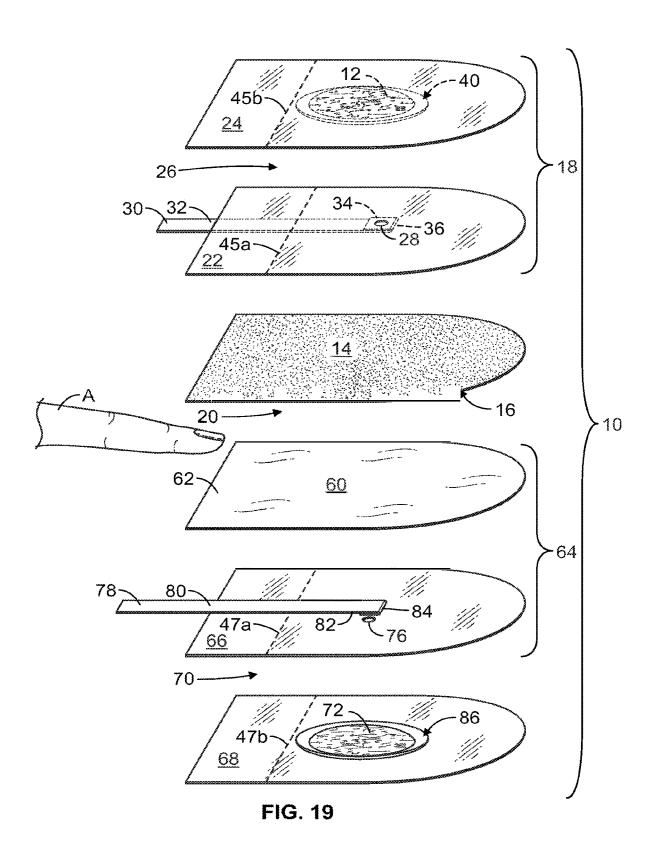


FIG. 18



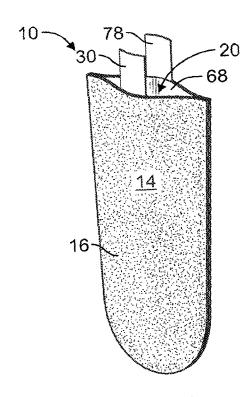


FIG. 20

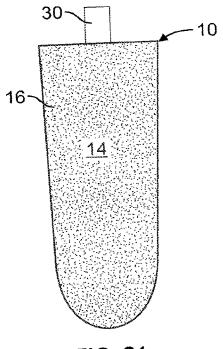


FIG. 21

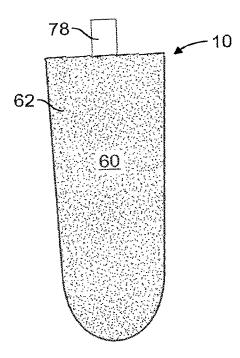


FIG. 22

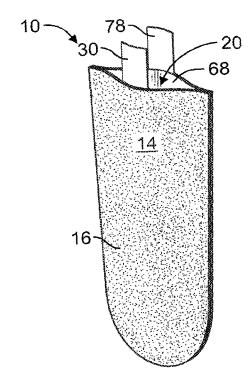


FIG. 23

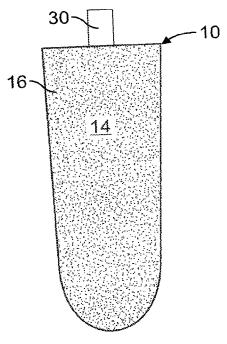


FIG. 24

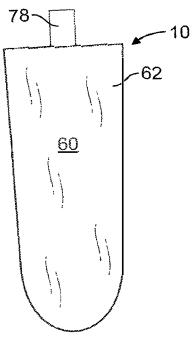


FIG. 25

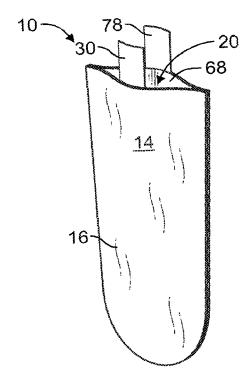


FIG. 26

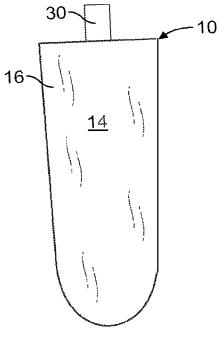


FIG. 27

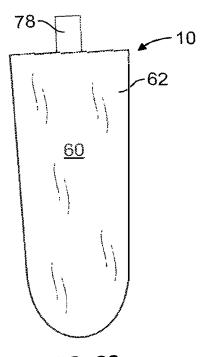


FIG. 28

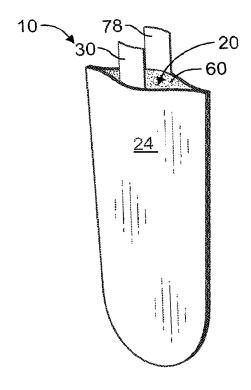


FIG. 29

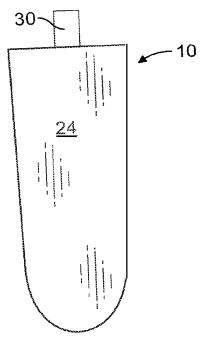


FIG. 30

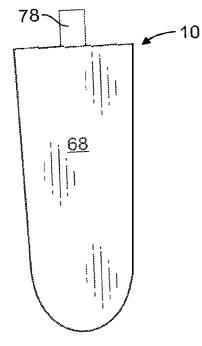
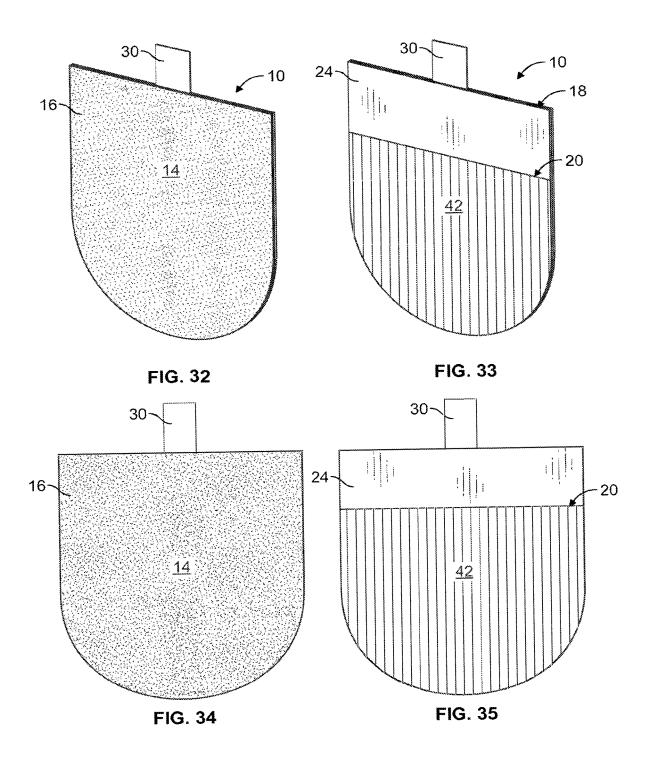


FIG. 31



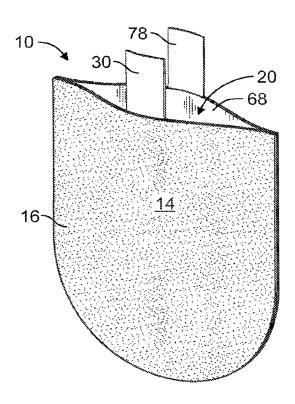
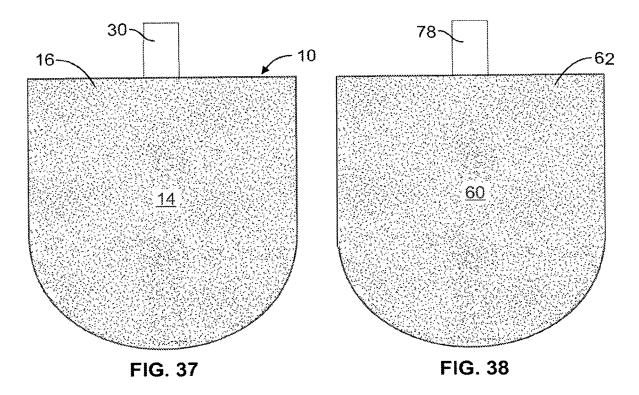


FIG. 36



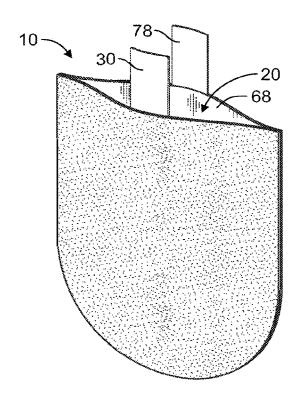
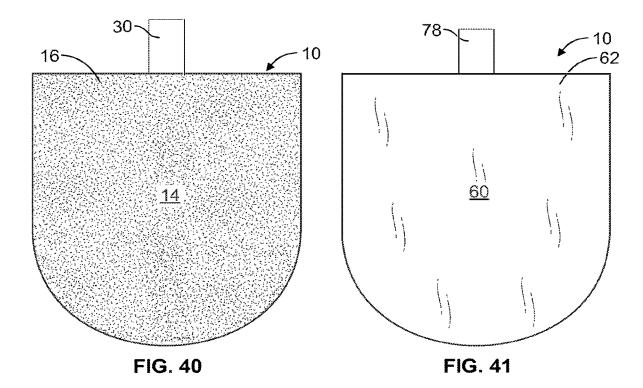


FIG. 39



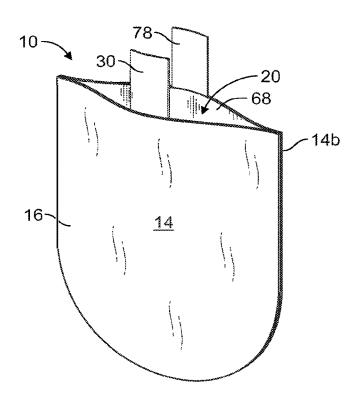
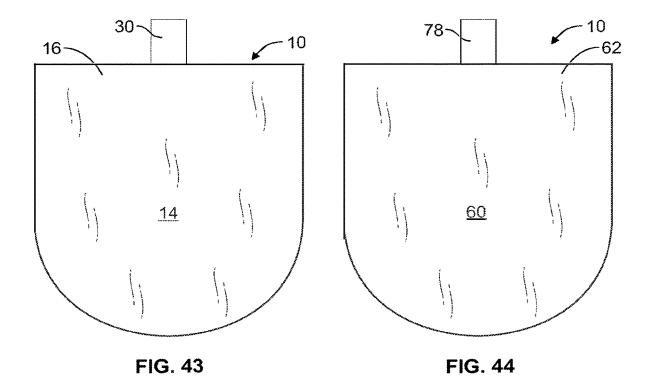


FIG. 42



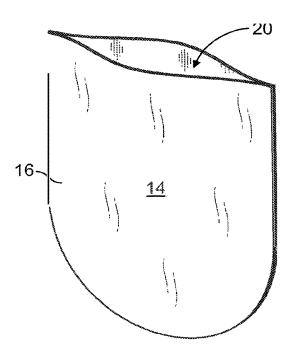
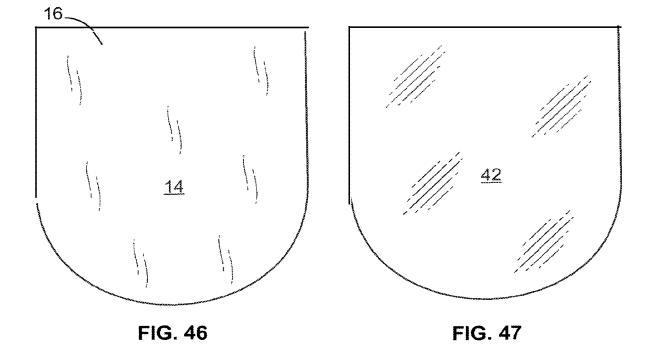


FIG. 45



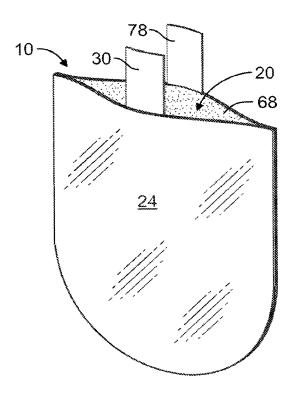
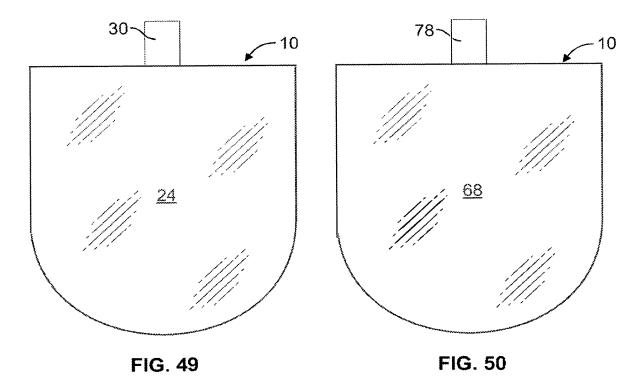
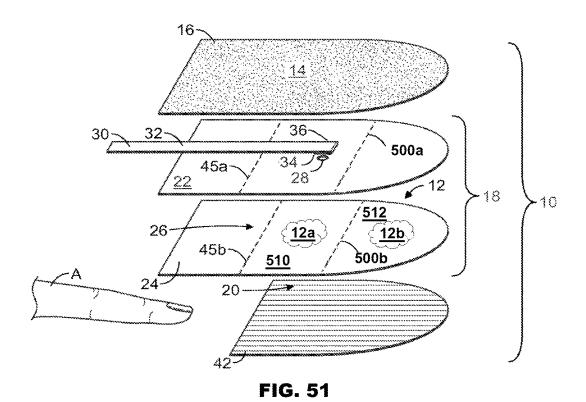
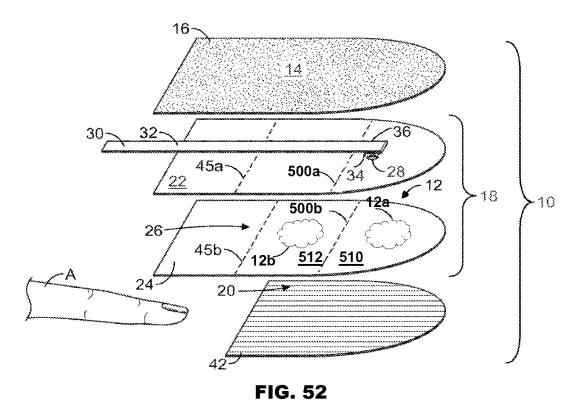


FIG. 48







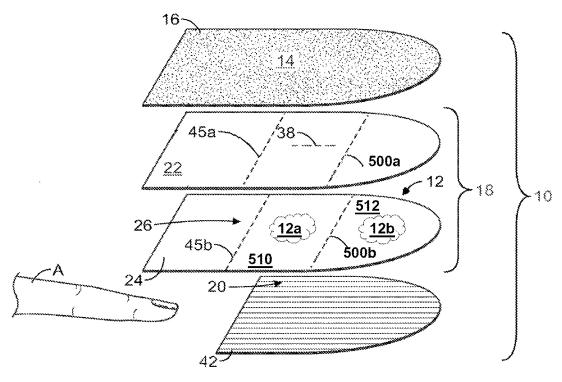


FIG. 53

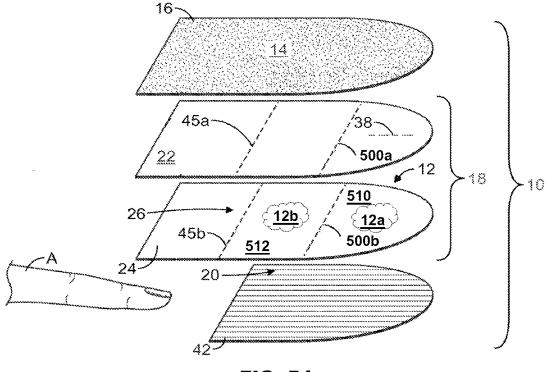


FIG. 54

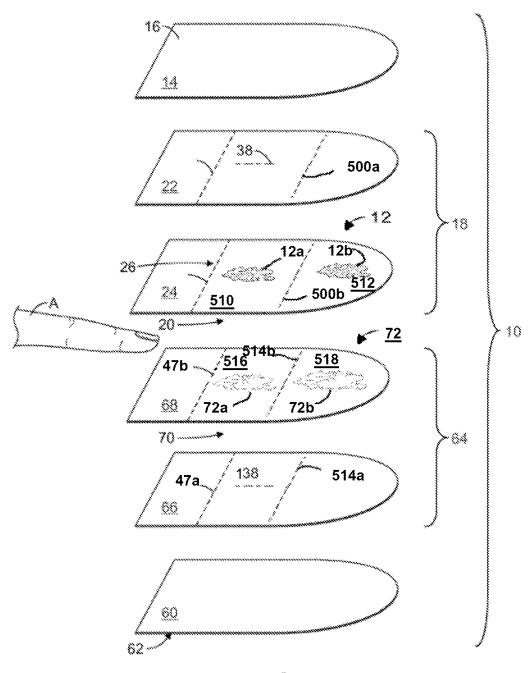


FIG. 55

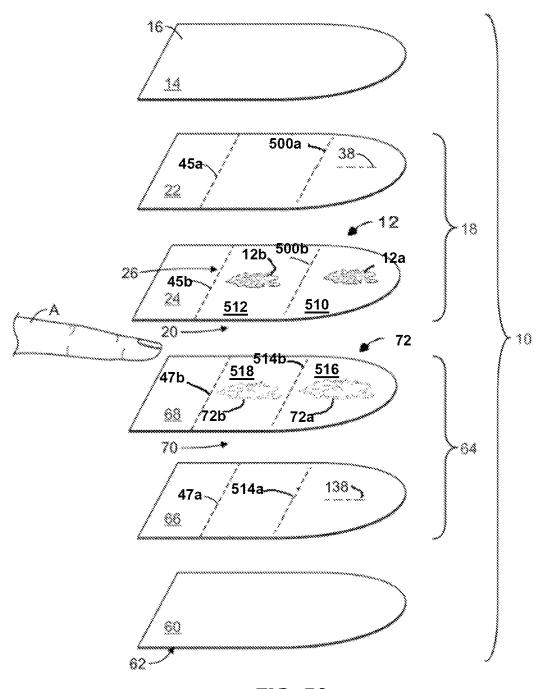


FIG. 56

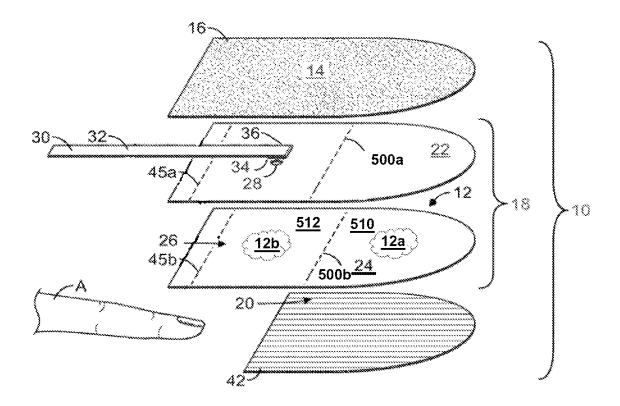


FIG. 57

HAND-HELD APPLICATOR

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The disclosed applicator relates to the field of hand-held liquid and cream applicators.

BACKGROUND

[0002] The application of a cream, polish, remover, repellant, or medicine usually requires the user to either place the substance from a container onto a cotton ball or swab or to place the substance directly on the surface it is being applied to. Doing so may result in too much of the substance being placed onto the surface or onto the cotton ball or swab. Further, such direct contact by the user may result in contamination of the substance or an adverse reaction if the substance contacts the skin or other organ of a user. A device that could eliminate possible contamination and adverse reactions would be useful in the application of such substances.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] A hand-held applicator for dispensing fill material from the applicator comprises (a) a first reservoir formed by a first reservoir access layer having a perimeter and affixed to a first back layer around at least a portion of a perimeter of the hand-held applicator, the first reservoir access layer and first back layer defining a fill space divided into at least a first and a second chamber; (b) a first applicator layer adjacent and sealed to the first reservoir access layer for dispensing a first amount of fill material from the first reservoir; (c) a frangible seal separating the at least a first and second chamber of the first reservoir, the frangible seal transformable between a first, closed state sealing the chambers from each other and a second, open state by applying a burst force on the frangible seal enabling fluid communication between the chambers; (d) a first tab releasably affixed to the first reservoir access layer and overlying and covering a first access hole, the first tab is a separate piece from the first reservoir access layer, the first access hole transformable from a first, closed state covered by the first tab to a second, open state by applying a removal force to the first tab to uncover the first access hole and enable fluid communication between the fill space of the first reservoir and the first applicator layer; and (e) a finger receiving space. The burst force required to open the frangible seal is less than the removal force required to separate the first tab from the first reservoir access layer, and wherein dislodging the first tab to expose the first access hole does not tear or damage the first reservoir access layer. The first amount of fill material is formed from a first material in the first compartment mixed with a second material in the second compartment of the first reservoir after the first frangible seal is broken.

[0004] In another embodiment, a hand-held applicator for dispensing fill material stored in the applicator comprises:
(a) a first reservoir formed by a first reservoir access layer having a perimeter and affixed to a first back layer around at least a portion of a perimeter of the hand-held applicator, the first reservoir access layer and first back layer defining a fill space divided into at least a first and a second chamber; (b) a first applicator layer adjacent and sealed to the first reservoir access layer for dispensing a first amount of fill material from the first reservoir; (c) a frangible seal sepa-

rating the at least a first and second chamber of the first reservoir, the frangible seal transformable between a first, closed state sealing the chambers from each other and a second, open state by applying a burst force on the frangible seal enabling fluid communication between the chambers; (d) a first applicator layer adjacent and affixed to the first reservoir access layer having a first plurality of perforations transformable from a first, closed state to a second, open state by the first amount of fill material applying a second burst force on the plurality of perforations, the first applicator layer in the second, open state enables fluid communication between the fill space of the first reservoir and the first applicator layer; and (e) a finger receiving space. The first burst force required to break the frangible seal is less than the second burst force required to open the plurality of perforations. The first amount of fill material is formed from a first material in the first compartment mixed with a second material in the second compartment of the first reservoir after the first frangible seal is broken.

[0005] With both configurations, the applicator may comprise a single half or mirror image upper and lower halves with the finger receiving space adjacent the reservoirs or adjacent the applicator layers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] FIG. 1 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the invention;

[0007] FIG. $\bar{\mathbf{2}}$ is a second isometric view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. $\mathbf{1}$;

[0008] FIG. 3 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 1;

[0009] FIG. 4 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 1;

[0010] FIG. 5 is an exploded isometric view of the handheld applicator of FIG. 1;

[0011] FIG. 6 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the invention;

[0012] FIG. 7 is a second isometric view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 6;

[0013] FIG. $\bf 8$ is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. $\bf 6$;

[0014] FIG. 9 is an exploded isometric view of the handheld applicator of FIG. 6;

[0015] FIG. 10 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the invention;

[0016] FIG. 11 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the invention;

[0017] FIG. 12 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the invention;

[0018] FIG. 13 is an isometric view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 10;

[0019] FIG. 14 is a front elevation view of a hand-held applicator according to the invention;

[0020] FIG. 15 is an isometric view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 14;

[0021] FIG. 16 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the present invention;

[0022] FIG. 17 is an isometric view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 16;

[0023] FIG. 18 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the present invention;

[0024] FIG. 19 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the present invention;

[0025] FIG. 20 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0026] FIG. 21 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 20;

 $[\hat{0027}]$ FIG. 22 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 20;

[0028] FIG. 23 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0029] FIG. 24 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 23;

 $[\overline{0030}]$ FIG. 25 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 23;

[0031] FIG. 26 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0032] FIG. 27 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 26;

[0033] FIG. 28 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 26;

[0034] FIG. 29 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0035] FIG. 30 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 29;

[0036] FIG. 31 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 29;

[0037] FIG. 32 is a front isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0038] FIG. 33 is a rear isometric view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 32;

[0039] FIG. 34 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 20;

[0040] FIG. 35 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 20;

[0041] FIG. 36 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0042] FIG. 37 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 36;

[0043] FIG. 38 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 36;

[0044] FIG. 39 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0045] FIG. 40 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 39;

[0046] FIG. 41 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 39;

[0047] FIG. 42 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0048] FIG. 43 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 42;

[0049] FIG. 44 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 42;

[0050] FIG. 45 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0051] FIG. 46 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 45;

[0052] FIG. 47 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 45;

[0053] FIG. 48 is an isometric view of a hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0054] FIG. 49 is a front elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 48;

[0055] FIG. 50 is a rear elevation view of the hand-held applicator of FIG. 48;

[0056] FIG. 51 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the present invention;

[0057] FIG. 52 is an exploded isometric view of another hand-held applicator according to the present invention;

[0058] FIG. 53 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the present invention;

[0059] FIG. 54 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the present invention;

[0060] FIG. 55 is an exploded isometric view of a handheld applicator according to the present invention; and [0061] FIG. 56 is an exploded isometric view of another hand-held applicator according to the present invention; and [0062] FIG. 57 is an exploded isometric view of another

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

hand-held applicator according to the present invention.

[0063] From time-to-time, the present invention is described herein in terms of example environments. Description in terms of these environments is provided to allow the various features and embodiments of the invention to be portrayed in the context of an exemplary application. After reading this description, it will become apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art how the invention can be implemented in different and alternative environments.

[0064] Unless defined otherwise, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meaning as is commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which this invention belongs. All patents, applications, published applications and other publications referred to herein are incorporated by reference in their entirety. If a definition set forth in this section is contrary to or otherwise inconsistent with a definition set forth in applications, published applications and other publications that are herein incorporated by reference, the definition set forth in this document prevails over the definition that is incorporated herein by reference.

[0065] The drawings appended hereto show embodiments of an inventive, hand-held applicator 10 for storing and administering pre-determined amounts of fill material 12, including solutions, creams, polishes, medicines, medicaments, ointments and the like in a manner to minimize excess, waste, contamination, and mess. As represented in FIG. 5, an embodiment of the inventive hand-held applicator 10 generally comprises a first applicator layer 14 with an applicator surface 16, a first reservoir 18 adjacent the first applicator layer 14 and configured to store and dispense a predetermined amount of the fill material 12 through the first applicator layer 14, and a finger-receiving space 20 configured to receive a finger or fingers of the user or a similarly shaped extension of a tool or appliance.

[0066] The first applicator layer 14 in one embodiment may comprise a sponge or a foam (FIG. 5) and may comprise a cloth (FIG. 9) in another embodiment. The first applicator layer 14 is of various thickness, porosity, and composition depending on the specific fill material and application. For example, if a thicker cream is held in the reservoir layer an open-pore sponge or cloth would be preferable to enable ease of flow and transfer of the cream to the surface of the applicator. The sponge, foam, or cloth can be impregnated with product in crystalline or powder form and then activated upon introduction of liquid fill material 12 from the reservoir layer 18. The sponge, foam, or cloth applicator layers 14 are selected to be more or less abrasive depending on the specific application. When used, for example, to exfoliate skin and apply moisturizer the sponge or cloth is preferably more abrasive to improve its exfoliation efficacy. In contrast, when applying a cleaner to a headlight lens, a less abrasive sponge or cloth is desirable to avoid scratching the lens material.

[0067] The first reservoir 18 is formed from a reservoir access layer 22 and back layer 24 welded, glued, or sealed together around the periphery to form and define a fill space 26. The volume of the fill space is easily adjustable by sealing the fill space 26 at various points on the reservoir access layer 22 and back layer 24. A fill space seal 45a, 45b is shown in FIG. 5 to form a fill space of a first volume. Fill space seals 45a, 45b and 47a, 47b are shown in the embodiments of the applicator 10 seen in FIGS. 9, 10, 16, 18, and 19. The reservoir access layer 22 is adjacent the first applicator layer 14 and transformable between a first, closed position where the fill material is securely sealed in the first reservoir 18 and second, open position enabling fluid communication between the first reservoir 18 and first applicator layer 14 for dispensing the fill material 12. The materials selected to form the reservoir access layer 22 and back layer 24 will be dictated by the shelf life and/or nature of the fill material 12 and are generally selected from various foils or polyethylene films.

[0068] The reservoir access layer 22, as seen in the embodiments of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 5 and 9, is transformable from a first, closed position where the fill material 12 is secured within the fill space 26 and a second, open position enabling fluid communication between the first reservoir 18 and the first applicator layer 14. Referring to the embodiment of the applicator in FIG. 5, the first reservoir access layer 22 comprises an access hole 28 releasably covered by a first tab 30. The tab 30 comprises an extension portion 32 and a fold over portion 34 separated by a fold 36, with the fold over portion 34 affixed to the reservoir access layer 22 over the access hole 28. To maintain the structural integrity of the applicator 10 during operation, to expose the access hole 28 the user pulls on the extension portion 32 causing the tab 30 to unfurl or straighten the fold 36 as the fold over portion 34 releases from the reservoir access layer 22. This arrangement prevents unwanted pulling or distortion of the reservoir access

[0069] As seen in the embodiment of the applicator 10 shown in FIG. 9, the reservoir access layer 22 may comprise a first plurality of perforations 38 that will open or burst when appropriate pressure is applied to the first reservoir 18. When first plurality of perforations 38 open, the reservoir access layer 22 facilitates fluid communication between the first reservoir 18 and first applicator layer 14.

[0070] In other embodiments of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 10-12, the fill space 26 is further divided into a plurality of compartments. In these figures, the fill space 26 is divided into a first and a second compartment 26a, 26b and the fill material 12 is divided into a first material 12a and a second material 12b. The first and second materials 12a, 12b may be the same or different materials and may be the same or different quantities. The first and second compartments 26a, 26b can be formed by a weld or seal formed along guidelines shown as 44a, 44b in FIGS. 10-12, and shown as a completed weld or seal 44 in FIG. 13, on the reservoir access layer 22 and reservoir back layer 24. The fill space 26 divided into first and second compartment 26a, 26b at weld line 44a, 44b is exemplary and not limiting as to the number of compartments within the fill space.

[0071] FIG. 10 shows access holes 28a, 28b covered by a single tab 30. The tab 30 comprises an extension portion 32, fold over portion 34, and fold 36. When the first and second materials 12a, 12b are different or intended to be dispensed at different times, a first and second tab, as seen in FIG. 11, may be utilized. The applicator 10 of FIG. 12 uses a first and second plurality of perforations 38a, 38b to access the first and second materials 12a, 12b in the first and second compartments 26a, 26b of the fill space 26. In this configuration, the first plurality of perforations 38a is associated with and overlies the first compartment 26a of the fill space 26 and the second plurality of perforations 38b is associated with and overlie the second compartment 26b of the fill space 26.

[0072] The first reservoir 18 stores the fill material 12 to be dispensed by the first applicator layer 14. The fill material 12 to be dispensed may be applied directly in the fill space 18, as shown in the embodiment of the applicator in FIG. 5, or may be a capsule 40, as shown in the embodiment of the applicator in FIG. 9, or a plurality of capsules (not shown in the figures) placed into the fill space 26 and secured into position during assembly of the applicator 10. When the reservoir access layer 22 is in the access hole 26 and tab 30 configuration, shown in the embodiment of FIG. 5, and the fill material 12 is directly applied in the fill space 18, the fill material 12 is dispensed by removing the tab 30 and applying pressure to the fill material 12. The applied pressure urges the fill material 12 from the fill space 18, through the access hole 26, and to the first applicator layer 14 for application at the first applicator surface 16. The pressure is applied by the user at the finger or fingers in the fingerreceiving space 20 and/or an additional finger or fingers outside the applicator 10 pinching or squeezing the first reservoir 18.

[0073] When the fill material 12 is stored in a material capsule 40, as shown in the embodiment in FIG. 9, the user should first burst the capsule to release the fill material 12 before removing tab 30 from the access hole 26. The pressure necessary to burst the material capsule 40 and release the fill material 12 is selected to be a reasonable pressure that can be easily applied by the user with a pinching action by the user's fingers, but greater than incidental pressure the applicator 10 may encounter during movement or storage. The bond strength of the weld or adhesive securing the tab 30 to the reservoir access layer over the access hole 26 and the tensile strength of the reservoir access layer should be greater than the burst pressure required to burst the material capsule 40. This prevents the user from applying a pressure to the material capsule 40 that will prematurely release the tab 30 from the reservoir access layer 22, exposing the access hole 26, and/or force the material capsule 40 through an open access

[0074] In embodiments of the applicator 10 with a material capsule 40 and a reservoir access layer 22 comprising a first plurality of perforations 38, as shown in FIG. 9, the burst pressure required to burst the material capsule 40 and perforations 38 should be equal or the burst pressure required to burst the material capsule 40 should be less than the burst pressure required to open the perforations 38. This ensures the fill material 12 in the material capsule 40 will be released from the capsule at the same time or before the perforations 38 open.

[0075] As seen in the embodiments of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 2, 4, 5, 6 and 9, the finger receiving space 20 is formed by application of a film layer 42 to the back layer 24 of the first reservoir 18. The film layer 42 may extend less than the length of the first reservoir 18, as shown in FIGS. 2, 4, and 5, or may extend the entire length of the first reservoir 18, as shown in FIGS. 6, 8 and 9. The film layer 42 is composed of a readily deformable or elastic material enabling the film layer 42 to lay flat during storage of the applicator and expand to comfortably receive a finger during operation.

[0076] An embodiment of the applicator 10 according to the present invention is shown in FIGS. 1-4 wherein the applicator layer 14 comprises an external or outward-facing sponge or foam layer. This applicator 10 corresponds to the applicator 10 shown in exploded view in FIG. 5. The reservoir access layer 16 is the tab 24 and access hole 26 configuration and the finger receiving space 20 is formed by affixing a film layer 42 to the back layer 24 of the first reservoir 18. In this applicator 10, the finger receiving space 20 is dimensioned to receive a single finger, e.g., the index finger of the user. In this embodiment, the applicator layer 14 could also be cloth or the reservoir access layer 16 could incorporate first plurality of perforations instead of the tab and access hole.

[0077] FIGS. 10-13 show embodiments of an applicator 10 according to the present invention wherein the fill space 26 is divided into a plurality of compartments. The embodiment of the applicator 10 in FIGS. 10 and 13 utilizes a single tab 30 and removal of the tab 30 will expose both the first and second access holes 28a, 28b simultaneously. FIG. 10 shows the first and second amounts of the fill material 12a, 12b as being directly applied in the first and second compartments 26a, 26b of the fill space 26. A first and second material capsule, such as the material capsule 40 shown in FIG. 9, can also be utilized. The applicator 10 shown in FIG. 13 is the assembled applicator of FIG. 10 with the weld or seal guidelines 44a, 44b in FIG. 10 shown as a finished weld or seal 44.

[0078] The embodiments of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 11 and 12 will be assembled in similar manner to the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 10, 13. The embodiment of the applicator 10 in FIG. 11 shows the fill space 26 comprising a first compartment 26a and a second compartment 26b, the first access hole 28a in the reservoir access layer 22 overlying the first compartment 26a and a second access hole 28b in the reservoir access layer 22 overlying the second compartment 26b. The first tab 30 releasably affixes to the first reservoir access layer 22 and overlies the first access hole 28a and a second tab 78 releasably affixes to the first reservoir access layer 22 and overlies the second access hole 28b.

[0079] In the embodiment of the applicator 10 shown in FIG. 12, the fill space 26 of the first reservoir 18 comprises a first compartment 26a and a second compartment 26b. A first plurality of perforations 38a in the reservoir access layer 22 overlies the first compartment 26a and a second plurality of perforations 38b in the reservoir access layer 22 overlies the second compartment 38b.

[0080] FIGS. 6-8, show another embodiment of applicator 10 according to the present invention wherein the applicator layer 14 comprises an external or outward-facing cloth layer. This applicator corresponds to the applicator 10 shown in exploded view in FIG. 9. The reservoir access layer (not

shown FIGS. 6-8) is in the plurality of perforations configuration and the finger receiving space 20 is formed by affixing a film layer 42 to the back layer 24 of the first reservoir 18. As seen in FIG. 8, the film layer 42 extends the entire length of the first reservoir 18. The finger receiving space 20 is dimensioned to receive a single finger, e.g., the index finger of the user. In this embodiment, the applicator layer 14 could also be sponge or foam, or the reservoir access layer 16 could incorporate the tab and access hold configuration instead of the first plurality of perforations.

[0081] Returning to FIG. 1, the outer periphery of the applicator 10 is shown to generally comprise opposing, straight sides 46, 48, an arced bottom edge 50, and straight top edge 52, with the tab 30 extending above the top edge 52. To reduce or preclude occurrences of the tab 30 being inadvertently, prematurely pulled and dislodged from the reservoir access layer (not shown), the top edge 52 of the outermost layers of the applicator 10 can be arced or a radiused curve to extend over the tab 30 (see FIGS. 14, 15). The curvature at the top edge 52 can match or be different from the curvature at the bottom edge 50.

[0082] Turning to FIGS. 16, 17, another embodiment of the applicator 10 according the present invention is shown having a protective covering 54 over the first applicator surface 16 to keep the first applicator surface clean and undamaged when not in use. As shown in FIG. 17, the tab 30 is removed from the applicator 10 pulling in the direction represented by arrow 56. The protective covering 54 is intended to be removed from the applicator in the direction represented by arrow 58. In this configuration, the likelihood of the protective covering 54 catching and pulling the tab 30 during removal of the protective covering 54 is reduced.

[0083] Applicators 10 described in connection with FIGS. 1-17 all generally comprise a single applicator layer 14 and a single reservoir 18. Other embodiments of the applicator 10 according to the present invention shown in FIGS. 18, 19 comprise multiple applicator layers 14, 60 and multiple reservoirs 18, 64. Referring first to the embodiment shown FIG. 18, the applicator 10 comprises a first applicator layer 14 having a first applicator surface 16, a first reservoir 18, a second applicator layer 60 having a second applicator surface 62, a second reservoir 64, and finger-receiving space between the first and second reservoirs 18, 64. As in previous applicators, the first reservoir comprises a reservoir access layer 22 and a back layer 24, with the reservoir access layer 22 and back layer 24 defining a fill space 26. The reservoir access layer 22 has a first plurality of perforations 38 enabling fluid communication between the fill space 26 of the first reservoir 18 and the first applicator layer 14.

[0084] This applicator 10 further comprises the second reservoir 64, the second reservoir 64 comprising a reservoir access layer 66 and back layer 68, together forming a fill space 70 for holding a second amount of fill material 72. The reservoir access layer 66 of the second reservoir 64 comprises a second plurality of perforations 72 enabling fluid communication between the fill space 70 and second applicator layer 60. In this applicator 10, the first and second applicator layers 14, 60 are cloth and first and second applicator surfaces 16, 62 extend outwardly or exteriorly. The first and second applicators layers 14, 60 can both be foam or sponge, or each applicator layer can be of different material. While the first and second amounts of fill material 12, 72 are shown directly applied into fill spaces 26, 70, either or both amounts of fill material 12, 72 could be

contained in a material capsule, such as the material capsule 40 of FIG. 9. Likewise, while both reservoir access layers 22, 66 are shown to include a plurality of perforations 38, 74, one or both sets of perforations could be replaced by the tab 30 and access hole 28 configuration shown in FIG. 5.

[0085] In the embodiment of the applicator 10 seen in FIG. 19, the applicator 10 is shown having a first and a second applicator layer 14, 60 defining the finger-receiving space 20. The applicator surface 16 of the first applicator layer 16 faces inward and opposes the applicator surface 62 of the second applicator layer 60. In this configuration, the applicator surfaces 16, 62 will apply the fill material 12, 72 onto a finger in the finger-receiving space 20. Similar to the applicator described in FIG. 18, this applicator 10 comprises a first reservoir 18 adjacent to the first applicator layer 16, with a reservoir access layer 22 and back layer 24 defining a fill space 26 for receiving a first amount of the fill material 12.

[0086] The applicator 10 comprises a second reservoir 64 adjacent the second applicator layer 60, also with a reservoir access layer 66 and back layer 68 defining a fill space 70 for receiving a second amount of the fill material 72. Both reservoir access layers 22, 66 are in the tab 30, 78 and access hole 28, 76 configurations. The reservoir access layer 22 in the first reservoir 18 comprises the tab 30 with a tab extension 32, fold over portion 34, and fold 36. The reservoir access layer 66 in the second reservoir 64 comprises the tab 78 with a tab extension 80, fold over portion 82, and fold 84. The first applicator layer 14 is a sponge or foam layer while the second applicator layer 60 is a cloth. The applicator layers 14, 60 could be both sponge or foam, or both be cloth. In this applicator the fill material 12, 72 is contained in material capsules 40, 86 held within the fill spaces 26, 70 of the first and second reservoirs 18, 64. The fill material 12, 72 can also be applied directly into the fill spaces 26, 70, as seen in FIG. 18.

[0087] FIGS. 20-31 show assembled applicators 10 in multi-reservoir and multi-applicator layer embodiments similar to the applicators shown in FIGS. 18, 19. The embodiment of the applicator 10 shown FIGS. 20-22 comprise a first and second applicator layer 14, 60 of sponge or foam and outwardly facing applicator surfaces 16, 62. Pulling the first tab 30 will expose a first access hole and enable fill material from the first reservoir to be dispensed through the first applicator layer 16 and pulling the second tab 78 will, similarly, expose a second access hole and enable fill material from the second reservoir to be dispensed through the second applicator layer 60. The finger receiving space 20 is defined by the back surface of the first reservoir (not shown) and the back surface 68 of the second reservoir. [0088] Embodiments of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 23-25 and FIGS. 26-28 are identical in configuration to the applicator of FIGS. 20-22, but with various material combinations for the first and second applicator layers 14, 60 shown. In the embodiment of applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 23-25, the first applicator layer 14 is sponge or foam and the second applicator layer 60 is cloth. In the embodiment of applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 26-28, the first applicator layer 14 and second applicator layer 60 are both cloth.

[0089] The embodiment of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 29-31, is similar in configuration to the applicator 10 shown in the exploded view of FIG. 19 with internally facing first and second applicator layers (not shown), 60. In this applicator 10, the second applicator layer 60 is a sponge

or foam. The first and second applicator layers 14, 60 can be either both sponge or foam, both be cloth, or be a combination of sponge or foam and cloth.

[0090] The various embodiments of the applicator 10 described in connection with FIGS. 1-31, all include fingerreceiving spaces 20 intended for single finger. The embodiments of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 32-49 all have finger-receiving spaces intended for two or more fingers. While the overall width of these applicators 10 is adjusted, as compared with the applicators shown in FIGS. 1-31, the overall structure, features, configuration, and functionality remain the same. Turning first to FIGS. 32-35, the embodiment of the applicator 10 shown in these figures is same as the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 1-4, with the wider finger-receiving space 20. Reference numbers and the description of the applicator 10 of FIGS. 1-4 apply to the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 32-35. Referring next to the embodiment of applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 36-38, the applicator 10 is the same as the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 20-22, with the wider finger-receiving space 20. Reference numbers and the description of the applicator 10 of FIGS. 20-22 apply to the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 36-38. The embodiment of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 39-41 is the same as the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 23-25, with the wider finger-receiving space 20. Reference numbers and the description of the applicator 10 of FIGS. 23-25 apply to the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 39-41. The embodiment of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 42-44 is the same as the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 26-28, with the wider fingerreceiving space 20. Reference numbers and the description of the applicator 10 of FIGS. 26-28 apply to the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 42-44. The embodiment of the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 45-47 is the same as the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 6-8, with the wider finger-receiving space **20**. Reference numbers and the description of the applicator 10 of FIGS. 6-8 apply to the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. **45-47**. The embodiment of the applicator **10** shown in FIGS. 48-50 is the same as the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 29-31, with the wider finger-receiving space 20. Reference numbers and the description of the applicator 10 of FIGS. 29-31 apply to the applicator 10 shown in FIGS. 48-50.

[0091] FIGS. 51-57 show additional embodiments of the present invention where the fill space 26 of the at least a first reservoir 18 (FIGS. 51-54, 57) and the at least a first and a second reservoir 18, 64 (FIGS. 55-56) are each further partitioned into at least a first and a second chamber 510, 512 by a frangible seal (represented by the dashed lines at 500a, 500b). The frangible seal at 500a/500b separating the at least a first and second chambers 510, 512 is transformable between a first, closed state sealing the chambers from each other and a second, open state by applying a burst force on the frangible seal, breaking the seal and enabling fluid communication between the chambers. In this configuration, the fill material 12 comprising a first material 12a in the first chamber 510 and a second material 12b in the second chamber 512 can be kept separate when the applicator 10 is not in use and mixed before being dispensed from a reservoir

[0092] Turning first to FIG. 51, the applicator 10 generally comprises a first applicator layer 14 with an applicator surface 16, a first reservoir 18 adjacent the first applicator layer 14 and configured to store and dispense a first amount of the fill material 12 through the first applicator layer 14, and a finger-receiving space 20 configured to receive a finger

or fingers of the user or a similarly shaped extension of a tool or appliance. The frangible seal at dashed lines 500a, 500b is a breakable weld or adhesion with a break point responsive to a predetermined burst force, temperature, and/or combination of burst force, temperature, and application time. The first amount of fill material 12 is formed from mixing a first material 12a in the first chamber 510 with a second material 12b in the second chamber 512 of the first reservoir 18 after the frangible seal at 500a/500b is broken. [0093] The finger receiving space 20 is adjacent the first reservoir 18 and is formed by a film layer 42 affixed to the first back layer 24 of the first reservoir 18. In another embodiment, like FIGS. 19 and 29, the finger receiving space 20 is formed adjacent an applicator surface 16 of the first applicator layer 14 by a film layer 42 affixed to the first applicator layer 14, and the fill material 12 from the first reservoir 18 is dispensed into the finger-receiving space 20. [0094] The first reservoir 18 is formed from a first reservoir access layer 22 having a perimeter and affixed to a first back layer 24 around at least a portion of a perimeter of the applicator 10 to form and define a fill space 26. In some embodiments of the present invention the first reservoir access layer and first back layer are formed from separate sheets of film and affixed to each other by weld or adhesion around the entire perimeter of the reservoir. In other embodiments the first reservoir access layer and first back layer are formed from the same sheet of film folded upon itself to form the layers. A fold and weld or adhesion around the non-fold portion of the perimeter define the reservoir. A fill space seal shown at dash lines 45a, 45b seals of the fill space **26** and is a permanent seal. The frangible seal (at 500a/500b) is formed in the closed state sealing the chambers 510, 512 from each other and preventing the first and second materials 12a, 12b from mixing. Applying the predetermined burst force to the frangible seal at 500a/500b causes the seal to open, facilitating fluid communication between the chambers 510, 512 and mixing of the first and second materials 12a, 12b.

[0095] The reservoir access layer 22, is transformable from a first, closed position where the fill material 12 is secured within the fill space 26 and a second, open position enabling fluid communication between the first reservoir 18 and the first applicator layer 14. The first reservoir access layer 22 comprises an access hole 28 overlying the first chamber 510 and releasably covered by a first tab 30. In the applicator 10 shown in FIG. 51 the second chamber 512 is forward the first chamber 510 towards the tip of the applicator 10. Alternatively, as seen in FIG. 52, the first chamber 510 is forward the second chamber 512 towards the tip of the applicator 10.

[0096] The tab 30 comprises an extension portion 32 and a fold over portion 34 separated by a fold 36, with the fold over portion 34 affixed to the reservoir access layer 22 over the access hole 28. To maintain the structural integrity of the applicator 10 during operation, to expose the access hole 28 the user pulls on the extension portion 32 with a removal force causing the tab 30 to unfurl or straighten the fold 36 as the fold over portion 34 releases from the reservoir access layer 22. In this arrangement dislodging the tab 30 to expose the first access hole 28 does not tear or damage the first reservoir access layer 22.

[0097] To facilitate the proper sequencing of the mixing of the first and second materials 12a, 12b and dispensing of the mixed fill material 12, the burst force required to open the

frangible seal at 500a/500b is less than the removal force required to dislodge the tab 30 from the first reservoir access layer 22. This enables the first and second materials 12a, 12b to mix before the mixed fill material 12 is dispensed from the reservoir 18. The burst forces required to open the frangible seal at 500a/500b, and the removal force required to separate the tab 30 from the first reservoir access layer 24 are both less than the force required to break the remaining welds and adhesions, namely, the fill space seal at 45a/45b and the welds and adhesions affixing the first reservoir layer 22 to the first back layer 24 and the applicator layer 14 to the first reservoir 18. This preserves the overall structural integrity of the applicator 10 during operation.

[0098] The first applicator layer 14 may comprise a sponge, foam, or a cloth and may, further, be impregnated with a powder or crystalline material. The first applicator layer 14 is of various thickness, porosity, and composition depending on the specific fill material and application. The applicator 10 is also shown having a protective covering 54 over the first applicator surface 16 to keep the first applicator surface clean and undamaged when not in use. The first material 12a and the second material 12b may be the same materials, e.g., liquid or creams, or different materials, e.g., powder and liquid when mixed form a cream/paste or emulsion.

[0099] FIGS. 53-54 show another configuration of the applicator 10 with the tab and access hole assembly seen in FIGS. 51-52 is replaced by a first plurality of perforations 38 in the reservoir access layer 22. In FIG. 53, the second chamber 512 is forward the first chamber 510 towards the tip of the applicator 10 and in FIG. 54, the first chamber 510 is forward the second chamber 512 towards the tip of the applicator 10. In both configurations the first plurality of perforations overlies the first chamber 510. The reservoir access layer 22 is transformable from a first, closed state to a second, open state by applying a second burst force to the first plurality of perforations 38 overlying the first chamber 510. When in the second, open state the reservoir access layer 22 enables fluid communication between the reservoir 18 and the applicator layer 14 to dispense the fill material 12. [0100] To facilitate the proper sequencing of the mixing of the first and second materials 12a, 12b and dispensing of the mixed fill material 12, the first burst force required to open the frangible seal at 500a/500b is less than the second burst force required to open the first plurality of perforations 38. This enables the first and second materials 12a, 12b to mix before the mixed fill material 12 is dispensed from the reservoir 18. The first burst force required to open the frangible seal at 500a/500b, and the second burst force required to open the first plurality of perforations 38 is less than the force required to break the remaining welds and adhesions, namely, the fill space seal at 45a/45b and the welds and adhesions affixing the first reservoir layer 22 to the first back layer 24 and the applicator layer 14 to the first reservoir 18. This preserves the overall structural integrity of the applicator 10 during operation.

[0101] In all embodiments described herein, the volumes of the first and second chamber 510, 512 are selectively variable based on the specific application of the applicator 10. This is seen when comparing the placement of the fill space seal at 45a/45b and frangible seal at 500a/500b in FIGS. 51 and 56.

[0102] Turning to FIGS. 55-56, these figures show applicators with mirror image upper and lower portions. Refer-

ring specifically to FIG. 55, the upper portion comprises the first reservoir 18 formed by the first reservoir access layer 22 and first back layer 24, and first applicator layer 14 with an applicator surface 16. The first reservoir fill space 26 is define by the permanent fill space seal at 45a/45b and the fill space 26 is partitioned into a first and second chambers 510, 512 by the frangible seal at 500a/500b. A first plurality of perforations 38 overlies the first chamber 510. In this embodiment, the second chamber 512 is forward the first chamber 510 at towards the tip of the reservoir 18. The lower portion comprises a second reservoir 64 formed by a second reservoir access layer 66 and second back layer 68, and second applicator layer 60 with an applicator surface 62. The second reservoir fill space 70 is defined by a permanent fill space seal at 47a/47b and the fill space 70 is partitioned into a first and second chamber 516, 518 by the frangible seal at 514a/514b. A second plurality of perforations 138 overlies the second chamber 516. Like the upper half, the second chamber 518 is forward to the first chamber 516 towards the tip of the applicator 10. The applicator shown in FIG. 55 is the same basic configuration but with the first chambers 510, 516 of the first and second reservoirs 18, 64 for the second chambers 512, 518 towards to the tip of the applicator. The pluralities of perforations shown in FIGS. 54-56 can be substituted with the tab and access hole configuration of FIGS. 51, 52.

[0103] In one method of manufacture of the applicators shown in the appended figures and described herein, a vertical form, fill, and seal ("FFS") machine is utilized to affix the various layers of the device together and is then die cut to the desired final shape. A roll of film or films is set in the FFS machine. In the perforation embodiments, the roll of material maybe perforated during manufacture or the micro perforations may be added as the material is unwinds from the roll. The film will go through forming stations to form the reservoir layer to hold the solutions or capsules with different solutions or saturated sponge/foam or cloth. In the process of forming and filling the reservoir layers, a roll of sponge/foam or cloth will follow the initial film roll/s as well as the elastic film to seal all components together. The assembly proceeds to the dye cutting station where it is cut to individual units of desired shape and size. In a horizontal form/fill/seal process, the roll of film with run through the forming station to form small or large reservoir layers in preparation for solutions or introduction of material capsules. A perforated film can then cover the solutions or capsules to seal the product close. A roll of cloth or sponge/ foam will cover the filled pouch to be sealed. From there, the assembly will travel to the cutting/punching station to be cut in the desired shape. From there it will travel to cutting/ punching stations to cut to desired shapes. In both methods, the perforated film can be replaced with a film having holes/apertures with a removable tab affixed over the holes.

[0104] Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the invention described herein is susceptible to variations and modifications other than those specifically described. It is to be understood that the invention includes all such variations and modifications that fall within its spirit and scope. The invention also includes all of the steps, features, compositions and compounds referred to or indicated in this specification, individually or collectively, and any and all combinations of any two or more of said steps or features.

[0105] Therefore, the foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since

numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

I claim:

- 1. A hand-held applicator for dispensing fill material from the applicator, the hand-held applicator comprising:
- (a) a first reservoir formed by a first reservoir access layer having a perimeter and affixed to a first back layer around at least a portion of a perimeter of the hand-held applicator, the first reservoir access layer and first back layer defining a fill space partitioned into at least a first and a second chamber;
- (b) a first applicator layer adjacent and sealed to the first reservoir access layer for dispensing a first amount of fill material from the first reservoir;
- (c) a frangible seal separating the at least a first and second chamber of the first reservoir, the frangible seal transformable between a first, closed state sealing the chambers from each other and a second, open state by applying a first burst force on the frangible seal enabling fluid communication between the first and the second chambers;
- (d) a first tab releasably affixed to the first reservoir access layer and overlying and covering a first access hole, the first tab is a separate piece from the first reservoir access layer, the first access hole transformable from a first, closed state covered by the first tab to a second, open state by applying a removal force to the first tab to dislodge the first tab from the first reservoir access layer, uncover the first access hole and enable fluid communication between the fill space of the first reservoir and the first applicator layer; and
- (e) a finger receiving space,
- wherein the first burst force required to open the frangible seal is less than the removal force required to separate the first tab from the first reservoir access layer, and, wherein dislodging the first tab to expose the first access hole does not tear or damage the first reservoir access layer.
- 2. The hand-held applicator of claim 1 further comprising:
- (d) a second reservoir formed by a second reservoir access layer affixed to a second back layer around at least a portion of the perimeter of the hand-held applicator, the second reservoir access layer and second back layer defining a second fill space divided into at least a first and a second chamber;
- (e) a second applicator layer adjacent and sealed to the second reservoir access layer for dispensing a second amount of the fill material from the second reservoir;
- (f) a second frangible seal separating the at least a first and second chamber of the second reservoir, the frangible seal transformable between a first, closed state sealing the chambers from each other and a second, open state by applying a burst force on the frangible seal enabling fluid communication between the chambers;
- (g) a second tab releasably affixed to the second reservoir access layer and overlying a second access hole, the second access hole transformable from a first, closed state covered by the second tab to a second, open state by applying a removal force to the second tab uncovering the second access hole and enabling fluid com-

- munication between the fill space of the second reservoir and the second applicator layer,
- wherein the burst force required to break the second frangible seal is less than the removal force required to separate the second tab from the second reservoir access layer, and, wherein dislodging the first tab to expose the first access hole does not tear or damage the reservoir access layer.
- 3. The hand-held applicator of claim 1 wherein the tab comprises a tab extension portion and a fold over portion separated by a fold, the fold over portion releasably affixes the first reservoir access layer and overlies the first access hole, and wherein applying the removal force and pulling on the tab extension in a tab removal direction causes the tab to unfurl and straighten at the fold.
- **4**. The hand-held applicator of claim **1** wherein the first amount of fill material is formed from a first material in the first compartment mixed with a second material in the second compartment of the first reservoir after the first frangible seal is broken.
- 5. The hand-held applicator of claim 2 wherein the second amount of fill material is formed from a first material from the first compartment mixed with a second material from the second compartment of the second reservoir after the second frangible seal is broken.
- **6**. The hand-held applicator of claim **2** wherein the first amount of fill material and second amount of fill material are the same or different.
- 7. The hand-held applicator of claim 1 wherein the finger receiving space is adjacent the first reservoir and is formed by a film layer affixed to the first back layer of the first reservoir.
- 8. The hand-held applicator of claim 1 wherein the finger receiving space is formed adjacent an applicator surface of the first applicator layer by a film layer affixed to the first applicator layer, and the fill material from the first reservoir is dispensed through the reservoir access layer into the finger-receiving space.
- 9. The hand-held applicator of claim 2 wherein the first applicator layer is adjacent the second applicator layer and the finger-receiving space is formed therebetween, and wherein the fill material from the first reservoir is dispensed through the first reservoir access layer into the finger-receiving space and the fill material from the second reservoir is dispensed through the second reservoir access layer into the finger-receiving space.
- 10. The hand-held applicator of claim 1 wherein the first applicator layer is selected from the group consisting of a sponge, a cloth, and a foam.
- 11. The hand-held applicator of claim 1 wherein the applicator layer is impregnated with a powder or crystalline material.
- 12. A hand-held applicator for dispensing fill material stored in the applicator, the applicator comprising:
 - (a) a first reservoir formed by a first reservoir access layer having a perimeter and affixed to a first back layer around at least a portion of a perimeter of the hand-held applicator, the first reservoir access layer and first back layer defining a fill space partitioned into at least a first and a second chamber;
 - (b) a first applicator layer adjacent and sealed to the first reservoir access layer for dispensing a first amount of fill material from the first reservoir;

- (c) a frangible seal separating the at least a first and second chamber of the first reservoir, the frangible seal transformable between a first, closed state sealing the chambers from each other and a second, open state by applying a first burst force on the frangible seal enabling fluid communication between the first and the second chambers;
- (d) a first applicator layer adjacent and affixed to the first reservoir access layer having a first plurality of perforations transformable from a first, closed state to a second, open state by the first amount of fill material applying a second burst force on the plurality of perforations, the first applicator layer in the second, open state enables fluid communication between the fill space of the first reservoir and the first applicator layer; and
- (e) a finger receiving space,
- wherein the first burst force required to break the frangible seal is less than the second burst force required to open the first plurality of perforations.
- 13. The hand-held applicator of claim 12 further comprising:
 - (f) a second reservoir formed by a second reservoir access layer having a perimeter and affixed to a second back layer around at least a portion of the perimeter of the hand-held applicator, the second reservoir access layer and second back layer defining a fill space divided into at least a first and a second chamber;
 - (g) a second frangible seal separating the at least a first and second chamber of the second reservoir, the frangible seal transformable between a first, closed state sealing the chambers from each other and a second, open state by applying a burst force on the frangible seal enabling fluid communication between the first and second chambers;
 - (h) a second applicator layer adjacent and affixed to the second reservoir access layer having a second plurality of perforations transformable from a first, closed state to a second, open state by the first amount of fill material in the second reservoir applying a burst force on the plurality of perforations, the second applicator layer in the second, open state enabling fluid communication between the fill space of the second reservoir and the second applicator layer, wherein the burst force required to break the second frangible seal is less than the burst force required to open the second plurality of perforations.
- 14. The hand-held applicator of claim 12 wherein the finger receiving space is adjacent the first reservoir and is formed by a film layer affixed to the first back layer of the first reservoir.
- 15. The hand-held applicator of claim 12 wherein the finger receiving space is adjacent the applicator surface of the first applicator layer, is formed by a film layer affixed to an applicator surface of the first applicator layer, and the fill material from the first reservoir is dispensed through a reservoir access layer into the finger-receiving space.
- 16. The hand-held applicator of claim 12 wherein the first amount of fill material is formed from a first material in the first compartment mixed with a second material in the second compartment of the first reservoir after the first frangible seal is broken.
- 17. The hand-held applicator of claim 13 wherein the second amount of fill material is formed from a first material

from the first compartment mixed with a second material from the second compartment of the second reservoir after the second frangible seal is broken.

- 18. The hand-held applicator of claim 13 wherein the first amount of fill material and second amount of fill material are the same or different.
- 19. The hand-held applicator of claim 12 wherein the finger receiving space is adjacent the first reservoir and is formed by a film layer affixed to the first back layer of the first reservoir.
- 20. The hand-held applicator of claim 12 wherein the finger receiving space is formed adjacent an applicator surface of the first applicator layer by a film layer affixed to the first applicator layer, and the fill material from the first reservoir is dispensed through the reservoir access layer into the finger-receiving space.
- 21. The hand-held applicator of claim 13 wherein the first applicator layer is adjacent the second applicator layer and the finger-receiving space is formed therebetween, and wherein the fill material from the first reservoir is dispensed through the first reservoir access layer into the finger-receiving space and the fill material from the second reservoir is dispensed through the second reservoir access layer into the finger-receiving space.
- 22. The hand-held applicator of claim 12 wherein the first applicator layer is selected from the group consisting of a sponge, a cloth, and a foam.
- 23. The hand-held applicator of claim 12 wherein the applicator layer is impregnated with a powder or crystalline material.

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