Dec. 3, 1963 J. SPITERI 3,113,174

COVER FOR AN ELECTRICAL OUTLET

Filed Aug. 2, 1961

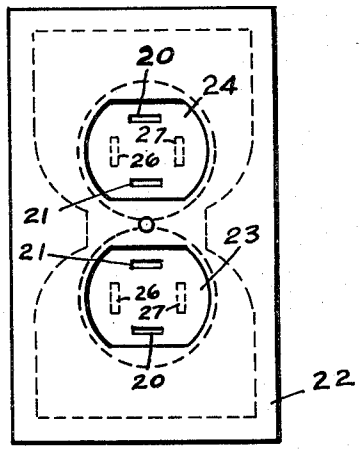


FIG. 1.



FIG 2

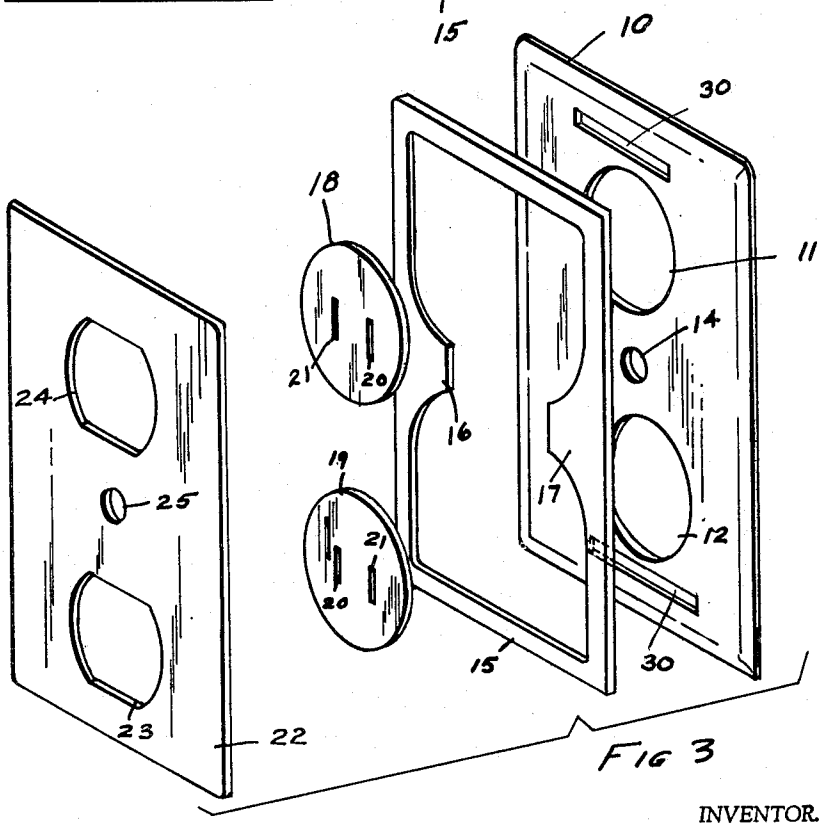


FIG 3

INVENTOR.
JOSEPH SPITERI
BY
Charles L. Lovendusk
attorney

United States Patent Office 3,113,174 Patented Dec. 3, 1963

3,113,174

COVER FOR AN ELECTRICAL OUTLET

Joseph Spiteri, Erie, Pa., assignor to Electr-O-Mech, Inc., Erie, Pa., a corporation of Pennsylvania

Filed Aug. 2, 1961, Ser. No. 128,888
1 Claim. (Cl. 174—67)

This invention relates to electrical outlet covers and, more particularly, to electrical outlet covers wherein the electrical elements are protected from inadvertent contact by any part of the body of a person.

In homes where children have access to electrical outlets, frequently, very young children will insert hairpins, nails, and other metallic objects into the openings in the electrical outlets and will be electrocuted or otherwise injured as a result thereof.

The present invention discloses an outlet cover which could be used for any A.C. or D.C. protection socket to prevent unauthorized usage or as a dust cover as well as a protective device to prevent and eliminate electrical shock hazards. The cover can be manufactured of plastic or any plastic like material.

It is, accordingly, an object of the present invention to provide an improved outlet which will prevent children and other persons from coming into inadvertent contact with the electrical elements therein.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved outlet cover.

A further object of the invention is to provide an outlet cover which is simple in construction, economical to manufacture, and simple and efficient to use.

With the above and other objects in view, the present invention consists of the combination and arrangement of parts hereinafter more fully described, illustrated in the accompanying drawing and more particularly pointed out in the appended claim, it being understood that changes may be made in the form, size, proportions, and minor details of construction without departing from the spirit or sacrificing any of the advantages of the invention.

In the drawing:

FIG. 1 is a front view of an electrical outlet having the cover disclosed herein assembled thereon;

FIG. 2 is a side view of the cover shown in FIG. 1; and

FIG. 3 is an exploded view of the outlet cover shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.

Now with more particular reference to the drawing, an outlet cover plate 10 is in the form of a conventional type of plate which is of the type frequently found on electrical outlets in homes and the like. The plate 10 has conventional spaced openings 11 and 12 through which the electrical elements of the outlet extend. The plate 10 has a central opening 14 which normally receives a screw to hold the plate in place on the electrical outlet. A slot 30 is provided in the plate 10 through which disks may be inserted when the cover is made of a single integral body. The disks will be made of thin flexible material.

A spacer 15 is provided which is in the form of an open frame of the same outside dimensions as the plate 10. The frame is generally planar, open at the center, and has inwardly projecting ears 16 and 17 intermediate its height. The ears 16 and 17 are spaced from each other less than the diameter of the disks 18 and 19 so that the disks cannot pass between them to effectively form a partition to keep the disks separated. The disks 18 and 19 are made of flat plate like sheets and each has spaced openings 20 and 21 therein. These openings are spaced equal to the spacing of the pintles on an ordinary electrical cord and are adapted to receive the pintles of a male electrical cord.

A top plate 22 is similar in construction to the plate 10 and it is of a flat sheet. The plate 22 has spaced openings 23 and 24 which are adapted to be coextensive

with the openings 11 and 12 and to overlie the openings 11 and 12 in the plate 10. A hole 25 is provided which is generally aligned with the opening 14.

During operation, the plate 10, spacer 15, and plate 22 are superimposed on each other and sandwiched together as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 with the disks 18 and 19 supported in the space outward of the ears 16 and 17. The plates 10 and 22 may be cemented to the spacer 15 to hold the device together. Therefore, it will be seen that since the disks 18 and 19 are slightly thinner than the spacer 15, they will loosely float in the space therebetween and will fall at random out of alignment with the openings 23 and 24 but will be limited in their movement by the ears 16 and 17.

Therefore, when the device disclosed herein is supported over an outlet in a wall in the manner that plate 10 would ordinarily be supported with the electrical outlet disposed in the openings 11 and 12, the disks 18 and 19 will be generally over the electrodes but the openings 20 and 21 therein will not align with the openings 26 and 27 in the electrical outlet so that a child inserting a metallic object into the openings 20 and 21 will not be injured by contacting the electrical circuit.

Then when a person desires to insert a convenience cord into the electrical outlet, he will insert the prongs thereof into the openings 20 and 21 in one of the disks 18 and 19 and he will rotate it until these openings come into alignment with the openings 26 and 27. He will then insert the cord plug into these openings and a connection will be completed.

The plate 10, plate 22, and spacer 15 may be manufactured of one piece to form a complete frame with a slot on the back side as shown in FIG. 3 for inserting washers. The slot can be left out when the plates are made separate. The device could be manufactured of any non-conductive material.

The foregoing specification sets forth the invention in its preferred practical forms but the structure shown is capable of modification within a range of equivalents without departing from the invention which is to be understood is broadly novel as is commensurate with the appended claim.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

A cover for a convenience outlet comprising two spaced plates each having two spaced openings therein, said spaced openings in one said plate being aligned with corresponding openings in the other said plate, an open frame member having an outside size substantially equal to the outside size of said plates and defining an open space underlying both said spaced openings and holding said plates in spaced relation, means holding said plates to said frame member, said frame member having intermediate, inwardly extending ear members therein dividing said open frame member generally into two compartments, and a round disk in each said compartment, each said compartment being substantially larger than each of said disks, said disks being slightly thinner than said frame member, said disks having spaced openings therein of spacing equal to the spacing of prongs on a male electrical plug, said disks being freely movable in the space between said plates, both said disks being disposed in said open space in said frame member.

References Cited in the file of this patent

UNITED STATES PATENTS

2,477,803	Huber	Aug. 2, 1949
2,710,382	Fitzpatrick et al.	June 7, 1955
2,744,243	Menendez	May 1, 1956
2,820,842	Meistrell	Jan. 21, 1958