# United States Patent

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[15] **3,694,979**

[45] **Oct. 3, 1972**


## [54] SKIRTING FOR MOBILE HOMES


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[22] Filed: **Nov. 12, 1970**

[21] Appl. No.: **88,584**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** .....**52/169,** 49/55, 52/632, 52/DIG. 3, 160/216

[51] **Int. Cl.**.....**E06b 9/00,** E02d 27/00

[58] **Field of Search**...52/DIG. 3, 169, 627, 632, 238, 52/241; 49/55, 464; 160/216, 219, 221, 223, 228



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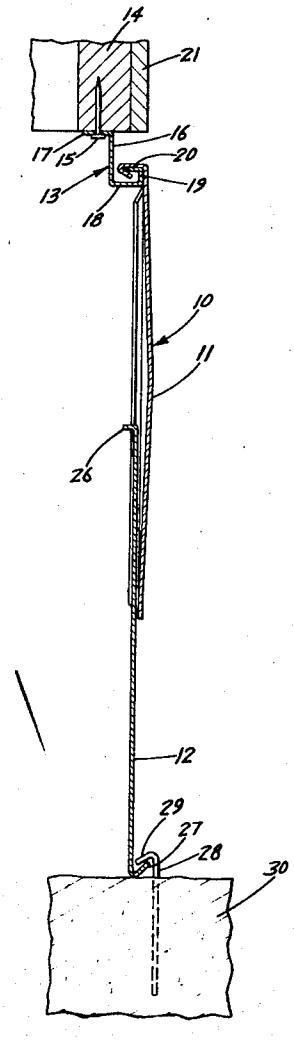
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

Skirting for enclosing the space under mobile homes and similar elevated structures for aesthetic and insulating purposes. The skirting comprises a plurality of segments arrayed end-to-end and suspended from a track mounted on the underside of the edge of the structure. Each skirting segment includes an upper flat panel and a vertically adjustable lower panel telescopically mounted in a pair of vertical channels at the ends of the upper panel. Adjacent segments are joined by engagement in back-to-back channels in a vertical connecting strip. Corners are finished off by segments of appropriate contour constructed in the same general manner as the flat panels.


**4 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures**



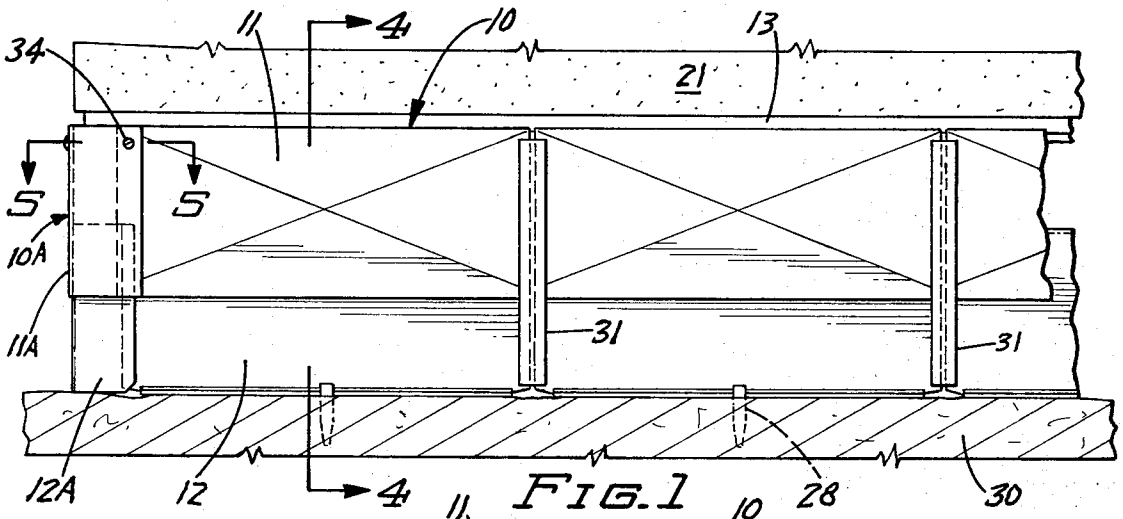



FIG. 1

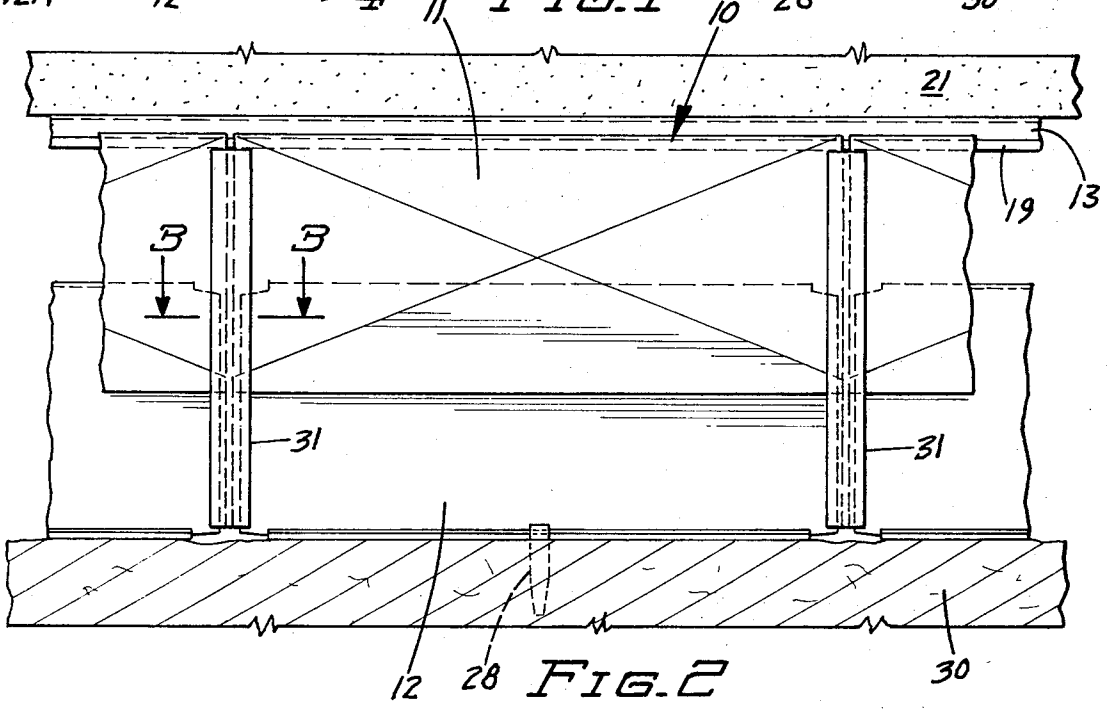



FIG. 2

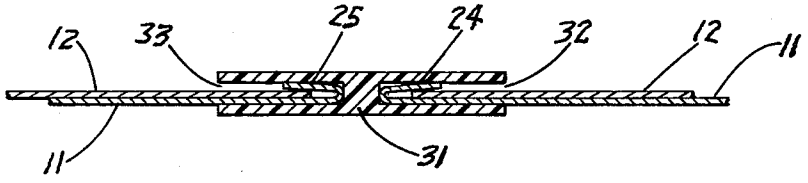



FIG. 3

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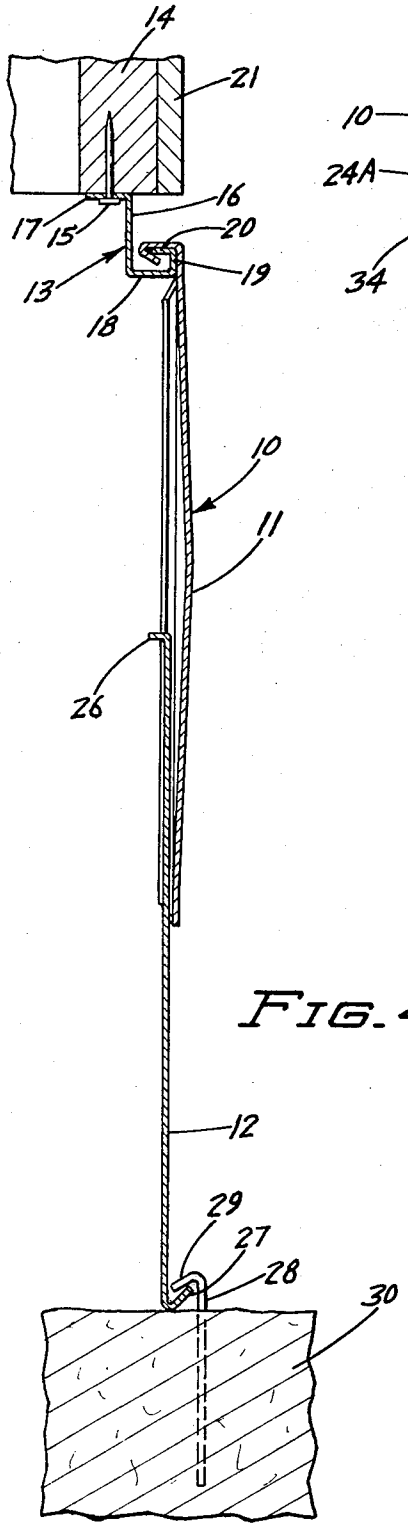



FIG. 4

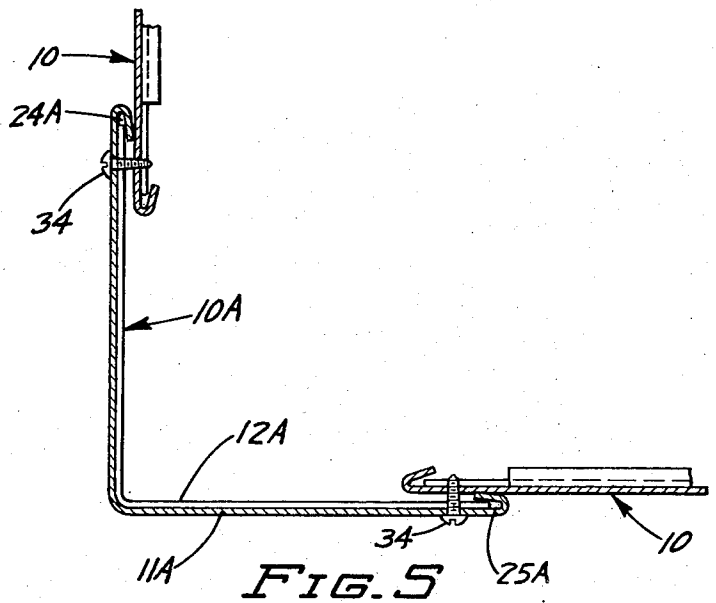



FIG. 5

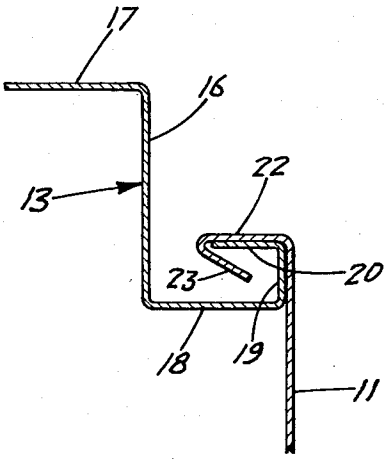



FIG. 6

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# SKIRTING FOR MOBILE HOMES

This invention relates to skirting for enclosing the space under mobile homes and other structures supported above the ground. The mobile home business is one of the fastest growing segments of the housing industry. Virtually every town and city has one or more so-called trailer parks in which a large segment of the population live more or less permanently in large house trailers or mobile homes. Some of these structures are actually set on permanent foundations. However, most, for purposes of taxes applicable or otherwise, are supported on wheels or blocks or the like permitting ready relocation if desired or necessary.

For the sake of appearance, as well as for the sake of comfort in many areas, it is common practice to fill in the space between the bottom edge of the mobile home and the ground. Such skirting as has been used in the past is often more utilitarian that aesthetic, often being no more than tar paper and lathe. Often the skirting is permanently installed, specifically adapted to whatever site the mobile home is resting on, and is not adapted to ready use if the mobile home is relocated. The present invention is directed to skirting for mobile homes which is designed to be pleasing in appearance as well as utilitarian, which is adapted to be used interchangeably in connection with mobile homes of all styles and makes of manufacture and adapted to be used on whatever different sites the mobile home may be located on.

The skirting of the present invention is adapted for easy attachment to mobile homes or similar structures. It is firmly fixed in place but can be easily removed to permit relocation of the structure or to permit access to utilities or storage on the underside of the mobile home. The skirting panels are telescoped for vertical adjustment for use on structures of varying heights above the ground to accommodate any settling of the structure, and to accommodate to non-level terrain. The skirting is adapted for easy installation by unskilled workmen.

If one or more panels become damaged, they can be easily replaced without disturbing other panels. The skirting panels are made in several standard lengths which can be combined with appropriate corner fittings to fully skirt mobile homes or other structures without the necessity for tailoring or cutting individual panels. The skirting is durable, waterproof, adapted to be colored as desired and attractive in appearance. The panels are adapted to be close fitting to maintain an insulating air space under the structure.

The invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which corresponding parts are identified by the same numerals and in which:

FIG. 1 is a fragmentary elevation showing the skirting installed at one corner of a mobile home or similar structure;

FIG. 2 is a similar fragmentary elevation showing skirting panels as installed intermediate of the corner panels;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary horizontal section on the line 3—3 of FIG. 2 and in the direction of the arrows;

FIG. 4 is a vertical section on the line 4—4 of FIG. 1 and in the direction of the arrows;

FIG. 5 is a horizontal section on the line 5—5 of FIG. 1 and in the direction of the arrows; and



FIG. 6 is an enlarged fragmentary vertical section of the mounting track and its engagement by a suspended panel.

Referring now to the drawings, the skirting is comprised of a plurality of generally flat rectangular segments, indicated generally at **10**, each composed of two panels, a main top panel **11** which is attached to the mobile home or other structure, and a lower slide panel **12** supported by the main panel. A mounting track **13** of generally Z-shaped cross-section having an outer flanged lip, as best seen in FIGS. **4** and **6**, is secured to the lower frame **14** of the mobile home or other structure to which the skirting is to be applied. The track **13** extends around the bottom periphery of the structure and is secured by means of nails **15** or equivalent fastening means.

The mounting track **13** is formed, for example, from sheet metal and comprises a vertical spacer component **16**, a horizontal plate component **17** extending inwardly at right angles from the upper edge of the vertical component, another horizontal plate component **18** extending outwardly at right angles from the bottom edge of the vertical component, a vertical lip **19** extending upwardly at right angles from the outer edge of horizontal component **18** and an inwardly extending horizontal flange **20** at right angles to the upper edge of lip **19**. The top surface of track plate components **17** abuts the bottom surface of frame member **14** spaced inwardly from the walls of the mobile home such that the skirting panels **10** are in substantial alignment with and lie generally in the same plane as siding **21** of the walls of the mobile home.

The top edge of each main panel **11** is provided with an inwardly extending horizontal flange **22** along the top edge of the panel, the inner edge of flange **22** having an obliquely outwardly and downwardly extending lip **23**. The inner bottom surface of flange **22** of panel **11** engages the outer top surface of track flange **20** and the panel is retained thereon by virtue of lip **23** engaging the inner edge of flange **20**. The panels are easily installed by inserting the top edge horizontally into the space between the overhanging edge of the frame **14** and the top of flange **20**, engaging flange **20** with lip **23** and swinging the skirting panels in an arc downwardly into vertical position.

The opposite ends of panels **11** are each folded back upon themselves to form vertical face-to-face channels **24** and **25** along the inside surfaces of the panels at their end edges. Each skirting panel **12** is of length slightly less than that of panel **11** such that the end edges of panel **12** are engaged in channels **24** and **25** and held loosely therein to permit telescopic vertical sliding movement of panel **12** relative to panel **11**.

For added strength and rigidity, panels **12** are desirably provided with an inwardly extending top flange **26** extending along the top edge of the panels but cut away adjacent the ends to permit clearance with channels **24** and **25**. Each panel **12** is also provided with a flange **27** extending outwardly and slightly upwardly from the bottom edge of panel **12**. Flange **27** imparts additional strength and rigidity to the panels and also permits engagement of the panel with a tent stake **28** or similar elongated peg-like fastening means having a hook-like member **29** at its top end. Elements **28** are adapted to be driven into the ground surface **30**

to hold the bottom edge of the skirting firmly in place against wind and the like. Panels **12** are desirably enough shorter than panels **11** (¼ to ¾ inch for example) to permit the slide panels **12** to fit relatively loosely within channels **24** and **25** so as to permit slight canting or vertical misalignment of panel **12** relative to panel **11** to accommodate slight inclines in the terrain.

Adjoining skirting segments **10** are secured together end-to-end by means of vertically extending connectors **31** of length corresponding generally to the expanded width of the adjacent skirting segments. Each connector comprises a relatively narrow strip (formed preferably from rigid, semi-rigid or flexible extruded rubber or synthetic resinous material) having relatively deep back-to-back channels **32** and **33** formed in its opposite side edges to receive the end edges of adjacent skirting segments.

As best seen in FIG. **5**, the skirting segments **10A** for corners and the like are of the same general configuration as already described but shaped with a horizontal cross section to conform to the corner or other nonplanar portion of the building structure. Component **10A** is designed for an outside right angle corner and is comprised of an outer panel **11A** whose opposite vertical edges are provided with inside channels **24A** and **25A** adapted to receive and engage the vertical edges of slide panel **12A** of the same general configuration. Panels **11A** and **12A** are telescopically slidable for expansion and adjustment, as already described. The corner segment **10A** fits outside of and slightly overlaps the end edges of adjacent skirting segments **10** and is secured thereto by sheet metal screws **34** or equivalent fastening means. Although skirting component **10A** is shown as an outside right angle corner, it will be obvious that, where the shape of the mobile home or similar structure requires it, the component may be arcuate in horizontal cross section, or otherwise shaped as required. Where a trailer hitch is to be skirted, the skirting segments may be formed with appropriate inside corner components and a generally U-shaped cap component to enclose the forward end of the trailer hitch, all formed generally as described with a fixed main panel having vertical edge channels engaging a telescopically movable slide panel.

The various skirting components are desirably formed from galvanized steel sheeting, sheet aluminum, or the like, of appropriate gauge. Enameled galvanized 28 gauge sheeting has been used with good result. The skirting is desirably finished by painting, enameling or the like so as to conform to or harmonize with the siding of the building structure on which it is mounted. The components are preferably made available in a variety of standard sizes which in combination can be used to enclose a building structure of any size without modification of the skirting components. Panels **11** are desirably dished slightly along diagonal lines extending from opposite corners to provide increased transverse strength.

Typical distances between ground level and the bottom edge of mobile homes are between about 15 to 36 inches. The panels are formed of a size to enclose spaces of this height. Typically, the main panels **11** are formed in widths of 14, 16, 18 and 20 inches. The corresponding slide panels range in width 11, 13, 15 and 17 inches, respectively. A 14 inch main panel used in conjunction with an 11 inch slide panel provides an expansion range of 14 to 23 inches. A 20 inch main panel used in conjunction with a 17 inch slide panel provides an expansion range between 20 and 35 inches. At maximum extension, there is about a 2 inch overlap between the main panel and slide panel.

Many mobile home furnaces draw outside air from underneath the floor of the mobile home to provide oxygen for combustion of fuel in the burning chamber of the furnace. The skirting panels and rail system according to the present invention are designed to allow air to be drawn in by the suction fans on the furnace. The air is drawn in over the top of the main panel where the panel attaches to the mount track. When the fan turns off, the air pressure equalizes keeping cold, outside air from entering under the mobile home.

It is apparent that many modifications and variations of this invention as hereinbefore set forth may be made without departing from the spirit and scope thereof. The specific embodiments described are given by way of example only and the invention is limited only by the terms of the appended claims.

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

**1.** Skirting for enclosing the space under elevated structures and comprising:

A. an elongated horizontal mounting track attachable to the bottom edge of an elevated structure, said mounting track comprising:
   1. a horizontal plate for attachment to the bottom surface of the elevated structure,
   2. a vertical spacer extending downward from said plate,
   3. a further horizontal plate extending outwardly from the bottom edge of said spacer,
   4. a flanged lip extending vertically upward from the outer edge of said further plate, and
   5. the flange of said flanged lip extending horizontally and inwardly from the upper edge of said lip,

B. a plurality of skirting segments suspendible from said track and disposable therealong in end-to-end relation, each of said skirting segments comprising:
   1. a first panel having a top horizontal lipped flange extending inwardly from the top edge of the panel along its length, the lip of said flange extending downwardly and outwardly from the inner edge of said flange for engagement with the inner edge of of the flange of the flanged lip of the mounting track, and a pair of face-to-face vertical channels extending along the opposite ends on the inward surface of the panel,
   2. a second panel corresponding generally in size and shape to said first panel, the ends of said second panel being engaged with a loose slide fit in the vertical channels of said first panel, said second panel overlapping and being telescopically vertically adjustable relative to said first panel, and
   3. means for anchoring the bottom edge of said second panel.

**2.** Skirting according to claim **1** further characterized in that:

A. said panels are generally flat and rectangular and formed from sheet metal,

B. said first panel is dished along diagonal lines extending from opposite corners for added strength, and

C. said second panel is flanged along its top and bottom edges for added strength.

3. Skirting according to claim 1 further characterized in that said means for anchoring the bottom edge of said second panel comprises:

A. an outwardly and upwardly extending flange disposed along the bottom edge of said second panel, and

B. a plurality of elongated peg-like elements adapted to be driven into the ground, the upper ends of said elements having hook-like members engageable with the flange at the bottom edge of said second panel.

4. Skirting according to claim 1 further characterized by corner skirting segments for connecting adjacent panel skirting segments at the corners of the structure, said corner skirting segments comprising:

A. a first member having a horizontal cross-section corresponding to the corner configuration of the structure,

B. inwardly facing vertical channels extending along the opposite edges of said first member,

C. a second member corresponding generally in size and shape to said first member, the opposite vertical edges of said second member being engaged in the vertical channels of the first member and said second member overlapping and being telescopically vertically adjustable relative to said first member, and

D. means for attaching said corner skirting segments to the structure.

* * * * *

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE
# CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,694,979 Dated October 3, 1972

Inventor(s) Marlynn D. Vadnie

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent are hereby corrected as shown below:

On the title page, in the listing of references cited, "3,042,257" should be --3,042,425--.

Signed and sealed this 13th day of February 1973.

(SEAL)
Attest:

EDWARD M.FLETCHER,JR.
Attesting Officer

ROBERT GOTTSCHALK
Commissioner of Patents