DISPENSER OF ROLLED WET WIPES

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ABSTRACT
A dispenser of a roll of moist tissues includes a housing having a first portion and a second portion together defining an interior area, the second portion being movable between a first configuration preventing access to the interior space and a second configuration allowing access to the interior area. The housing includes end walls each defining an opening. The dispenser includes a support rod having first and second portions and a spring therebetween, the spring biasing the portions outwardly from one another. The rod support members include terminal ends configured to extend through respective housing end wall openings, the terminal ends being configured to be coupled to a toilet roll holding bracket. A continuous roll of moist toilet tissues is configured to be positioned about the support rod and to be selectively unrolled therefrom.
DISPENSER OF ROLLED WET WIPES

REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims the benefit of provisional patent application U.S. Ser. No. 61/561,544 filed Nov. 18, 2011 titled Dispenser of Rolled Wet Wipes.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates generally to bathroom tissue dispensers and, more particularly, to a dispenser of rolled wet toilet tissue/wipes.

[0003] Toilet tissues are almost universally provided in a dry form on rolls and dispensed by unrolling a desired amount of tissue for use. Some types of tissues are more comfortable than others, some tissues are more durable than others, and some tissues may clean better than others. By contrast, wet wipes, such as those used in cleaning a baby or toddler while changing a diaper, are typically provided as separate sheets in a box container although more recently wet wipes have been provided in soft containers such as plastic bags. Wet wipes, however, have not typically been dispensed in continuous rolls in the manner of toilet paper.

[0004] Although existing methods and products for dispensing toilet paper and wet wipes are presumably effective for their intended purposes, they do not provide a good solution to the non-infant consumer who would desire to use wet wipes as an alternative to dry toilet paper in relation to the use of a toilet.

[0005] Therefore, it would be desirable to have a dispenser of wet wipes on a roll for use in the same manner as traditional toilet paper. Further, it would be desirable to have a dispenser of rolled wet wipes that is easy to install for use with a traditional residential or commercial toilet paper holding bracket. In addition, it would be desirable to have a dispenser of rolled wet wipes that keeps the moisture of the wet wipes from drying out.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] A dispenser of a roll of wet wipes according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention includes a housing having a first portion and a second portion together defining an interior area, the second portion being movable between a first configuration preventing access to the interior space and a second configuration allowing access to the interior area. The housing includes end walls each defining an opening. The dispenser includes a support rod having first and second portions and a spring therebetween, the spring biasing the portions outwardly from one another. The support rod support members include terminal ends configured to extend through respective housing end wall openings, the ends being configured to be rotatably coupled to a roll holder structure. A continuous roll of moist toilet tissue is configured to be positioned about the support rod and to be selectively unrolled therefrom.

[0007] Therefore, a general object of this invention is to provide a dispenser of a roll of wet wipes configured for use with an existing toilet paper roll holder.

[0008] Another object of this invention is to provide a dispenser of a roll of wet wipes, as aforesaid, in which a roll of wet wipes is dispensed from a housing that substantially maintains the moisture of the wipes until a portion of the wipes is intentionally removed.

[0009] Still another object of this invention is to provide a dispenser of rolled wet wipes, as aforesaid, in which the rolled wipes housing includes a slot through which wipes are removed, the slot having a cutting element to aid a user in separating a desired amount of the wipe tissue from the continuous roll.

[0010] Yet another object of this invention is to provide a dispenser of a roll of wet wipes, as aforesaid, that is easy to install, easy to remove wipes from, and cost-effective to manufacture.

[0011] Other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, wherein is set forth by way of illustration and example, embodiments of this invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a dispenser of rolled wet tissue paper according to one embodiment of the present invention illustrated in a closed configuration;

[0013] FIG. 2 is another perspective view of the dispenser as in FIG. 1 illustrated in an open configuration;

[0014] FIG. 3 is another perspective view of the dispenser as in FIG. 1 illustrating a variation of a continuous roll of wet toilet tissues;

[0015] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the dispenser as in FIG. 3 with the continuous roll of wet toilet tissue removed from the housing;

[0016] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the dispenser as in FIG. 4 with the support rod exploded from the continuous roll of wet toilet tissue;

[0017] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a dispenser of rolled wet toilet tissue according to another embodiment of the present invention illustrated in a closed configuration;

[0018] FIG. 7 is an exploded view of the dispenser as in FIG. 6;

[0019] FIG. 8 is a side view of the roll of wet toilet tissue taken from FIG. 7;

[0020] FIG. 9 is a perspective view of the dispenser as in FIG. 6 mounted to a vertical rod toilet paper roll bracket;

[0021] FIG. 10a is an exploded view of the dispenser as in FIG. 9; and

[0022] FIG. 10b is an isolated view on an enlarged scale taken from FIG. 5a.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0023] A dispenser of a continuous roll of wet wipes according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention will now be described with reference to FIGS. 1 to 10b of the accompanying drawings. The dispenser 10 includes a housing 20, a support rod 40 that removably couples the housing 20 to a toilet paper roll holding bracket, a roll 60 of wet wipes, and structures on the housing 20 for dispensing and removing a selective amount of the roll 60 of wipes.

[0024] The housing 20 includes a first portion 22 and a second portion 26 movably coupled to the first portion 22, the portions together defining an interior area 28 for receiving a roll 60 of wet tissues therein as will be described in more detail later. In one embodiment shown in FIGS. 1 to 5, the second portion 26 is a lid pivotally coupled to the first portion 22 and is pivotally movable between a first configuration preventing access to the interior area (i.e. a closed configura-
tion) and a second configuration that allows access to the interior area 28 (i.e., an open configuration). Preferably, each portion includes a generally hemispherical configuration although other configurations may also work. A handle 30 or other access element may be attached to an exterior surface of the second portion 26 to enable a user to move the second portion 26 between first and second configurations.

[0025] A front edge 24 of the first portion 22 of the housing 20 may include a serrated configuration for selectively severing a portion of the continuous roll 60 of wet wipes in use as will be further described later. The housing 20 includes opposed end walls 32 each defining an opening 34 for receiving ends of the support rod 40 therethrough as described below.

[0026] Turning to FIG. 5, the support rod 40 includes first 42 and second 44 support members each having a tubular configuration and being arranged in a slidable relationship. A spring 50 is intermediate the two support members 42, 44 and configured to bias the support members to extend outwardly from each other. Each support member includes an outward or terminal end 44. Each terminal end includes a configuration complementary to a respective end wall opening 34 so as to extend therethrough when the spring 50 biases respective support members outwardly. The terminal ends are also complementary to the recesses in a conventional toilet paper holder bracket so as to be nested therein the dispensers 10 is mounted to the bracket 2 (FIGS. 2 and 3). It is understood that the support rod 40 is configured to turn axially when operatively coupled to the toilet paper holder bracket 2.

[0027] At least one guide tab 38 may be coupled to a respective end wall 32 and be configured to rest atop the toilet paper bracket 2 when the support rod 40 is coupled to the toilet paper bracket 2 (FIGS. 2 and 3). It is understood that the guide tabs 38 are stops for preventing the dispenser housing 20 from spinning about the support rod 40 as an axle. The housing 20 may also include a pair of guide channels 36, each having a generally tubular configuration. The guide channels 36 are situated in respective end wall openings 34 and have opposed ends such that terminal ends of respective support rod support members 42, 44 are guided between the housing interior area 28 and respective toilet paper holder bracket recesses.

[0028] The roll 60 of moist tissue wipes is a continuous roll that may be selectively unrolled when the roll is mounted upon the support rod 40 and the support rod 40 is axially coupled to the toilet paper holding bracket 2 as described above. The roll of moist tissues includes a leading edge 62 that may be first pulled between the first 22 and second 26 housing portions. The tissue material may be pulled and thus unrolled when the housing portions are in the open configuration until a desired amount of tissue is unrolled. Then, the second portion 26 of the housing 20 may be moved to the closed configuration, causing the unrolled tissue to be severed against the serrated forward edge 2 of the first portion 22. Or, the first 22 and second 26 portions may be configured such that tissue may be unrolled even at the closed configuration and then severed when the user puts a downward pressure on the unrolled tissue against the serrated edge 24.

[0029] The roll 60 of moist toilet tissues/wipes may also include a continuous roll having perforations 66 or lines of weakness spaced apart at predetermined intervals. The perforations 66 are configured to enable a user to tear off a desired amount of tissue with less effort or perhaps even making use of the serrated edge 24 less necessary. In addition, the leading edge 62 of the continuous roll 60 may include a tab 64 to enable a user to more easily grasp the leading edge 62 and unroll the tissue as desired. It is understood that the perforations 66 may each be configured to include a tab 64 (not shown). In other words, a tab 64 may always be provided as individual portions of the continuous roll are severed for use.

[0030] Another embodiment of the dispenser 10 of wet wipes is shown in FIGS. 6-10B that includes a construction substantially similar to that described above except as specifically noted below. Primed numerals will be used for structures that are the same as previously described. In this embodiment of the dispenser 10, the housing 20 includes a first portion 22 and second portion 26 situated in lateral relation to one another and slidably coupled together. Each portion includes inwardly situated open ends and, when coupled together, define an interior area 28. Each portion includes a generally hollow tubular configuration. More particularly, the second portion 26 includes a diameter slightly smaller than a diameter of the first portion 22 and is, therefore, received into the open end of the first portion 22. Each portion also includes outwardly situated end walls 32, each end wall 32 defining an opening 34 for receiving ends of the support rod 40 therethrough in the same manner originally described above. This embodiment may also include guide channels 36 in the manner previously described.

[0031] Further, each portion 22, 26 defines a slot 23, 27 in a side wall in communication with respective open ends of respective housing portions (FIG. 7). The slots in each portion form a single slot when the portions are coupled together such that the moist tissue from the continuous roll 60 may be extended therefrom (FIG. 6). The slots may be surrounded by an outwardly extending rim or wall 29. A wipe cutter 63 in the form of a wire or the like may be situated in or adjacent to the slot that is configured to sever a portion of the continuous roll of moist tissue when a user urges the wipe against the cutter 63. It is understood that rubber seals 65 may also be situated in or adjacent to the slot to seal in moisture and prevent the continuous roll 60 from drying out.

[0032] As shown in FIGS. 9 to 10B, the dispenser 10 may also be mounted to a vertical rod type toilet paper roll holding bracket. The dispenser 10 may include an end cap to selectively insert into an upper end wall opening when mounted to the vertical bracket.

[0033] In use, a roll 60 of wet toilet tissue or wipes may be loaded into the dispenser housing 20 by first moving the housing to the open configuration. The support rod 40 may be inserted through the center channel of the roll 60 and then the roll 60 and support rod 40 inserted into the housing 20 such that the terminal ends 44 thereof extend through the housing end wall openings 34. Then, the terminal ends 44 may be inserted into corresponding recesses in the toilet paper holder bracket. In this configuration, the leading edge 62 of the wet tissue wipes may be extended outwardly from the interior area 28 of the housing 20 so that the continuous roll may be operated in the manner of traditional rolled toilet paper.

[0034] It is understood that while certain forms of this invention have been illustrated and described, it is not limited thereto except insofar as such limitations are included in the following claims and allowable functional equivalents thereof.

1. A dispenser of rolled wet wipes for use with a toilet paper roll bracket, comprising:
a housing having a housing first portion and a housing second portion movably coupled to said housing first portion, said housing first portion and said housing second portion together defining an interior area; wherein:
said housing second portion is movable between a housing first configuration preventing access to said interior area and a housing second configuration allowing access to said interior area;
said housing first portion and said housing second portion include respective end walls defining openings; a spring biased support rod having opposed support members, said support rod having a spring intermediate said support members configured to bias said opposed support members away from each other;
wherein each support member includes a terminal end configured to extend through a respective housing end wall opening into operative coupling with the toilet roll holding bracket; and
a roll of moist toilet tissues positioned about said support rod and configured to be selectively unrolled therefrom.

2. A dispenser as in claim 1, wherein said housing second portion is a lid pivotally coupled to said housing first portion, said roll of moist tissues being accessible when said lid is at said open configuration.

3. A dispenser as in claim 2, wherein said first and second portions of said housing include general hemispherical configurations, respectively.

4. A dispenser as in claim 3, further comprising a handle mounted to an exterior surface of said housing second portion, said handle configured to enable a user to move said housing second portion between said first and second configurations.

5. A dispenser as in claim 4, wherein said housing first portion includes a front edge having a serrated configuration such that said roll of moist wipes is selectively severed when said roll of moist toilet tissues is partially unrolled and said housing second portion is moved from said second configuration to said first configuration.

6. A dispenser as in claim 4, wherein said roll of moist tissues includes a plurality of spaced apart perforations by which said roll of moist toilet tissues is selectively separated into individual moist tissues.

7. A dispenser as in claim 1, further comprising a guide tab coupled to at least one of said housing first portion end wall and said housing second portion and extending outwardly, said guide tab being configured to rest atop the toilet paper holding bracket, whereby to prevent said housing from spinning about said support rod when said plurality of moist tissues are unrolled therefrom.

8. A dispenser as in claim 1, wherein said housing includes a pair of guide channels having tubular configurations extending through respective end wall openings, each guide channel having a configuration complementary to a configuration of said outer ends of said respective support rod support members so as to guide said support members into the toilet paper holding bracket.

9. A dispenser as in claim 1, wherein a leading edge of said roll of moist tissues includes a starter tab configured to enable a user to grab a leading edge of said roll of moist tissues.

10. A dispenser as in claim 1, wherein said housing second portion is slidably coupled to said housing first portion, said housing first portion and said housing second portion having an open inner end that, when coupled together, define said interior area.

11. A dispenser as in claim 10, wherein:
said housing first portion defines a housing first portion slot and said housing second portion defines a housing second portion slot that together form a single slot when said housing first housing and said housing second portion are coupled together; and
said single slot is configured to receive respective moist tissues therethrough as said roll of moist tissues is unrolled from said support rod.

12. A dispenser as in claim 11, further comprising a rubber seal situated in said housing first portion slot and said housing second portion slot so as to inhibit said roll of moist tissues from drying out.

13. A dispenser as in claim 11, further comprising a wipe cutter situated in or adjacent to said single slot and configured to selectively sever a portion of said roll of moist tissues when said roll of moist tissues is being unrolled through said single slot.

14. A dispenser as in claim 11, further comprising a guide tab coupled to at least one of said housing first portion end wall and said housing second portion end wall and extending outwardly, said guide tab being configured to rest atop the toilet paper holding bracket, whereby to prevent said housing from spinning about said support rod when said plurality of moist tissues are unrolled therefrom.

15. A dispenser as in claim 11, wherein a leading edge of said roll of moist tissues includes a starter tab configured to enable a user to grasp a leading edge roll of moist tissues.

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