July 17, 1962 F. L. REARDON 3,044,435

FIRE HYDRANT MARKING DEVICE

Filed Dec. 9, 1960

Fig 3

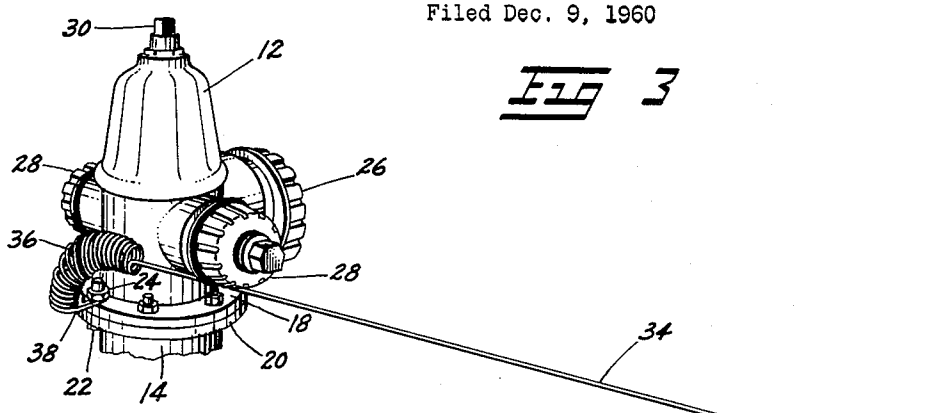


Fig 2

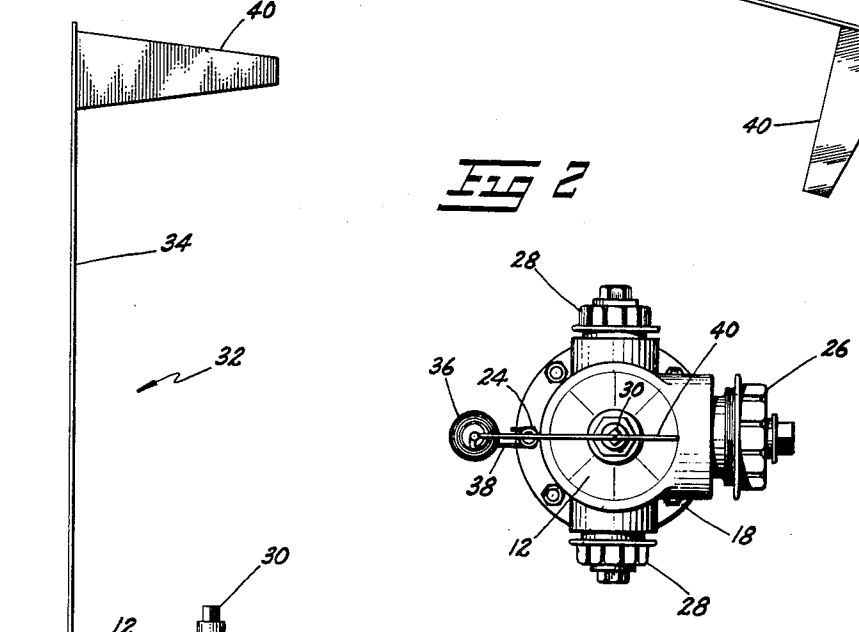


Fig 1

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FIRE HYDRANT MARKING DEVICE

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This invention relates to marking devices for fire hydrants.

One object of the present invention is to provide a marking device that will assist firemen in locating a hydrant even though the hydrant itself is covered with snow or is concealed by tall grasses and weeds. In the past, many hours have been wasted in making certain that snow has not covered the hydrants in a given area. By the same token, during the summer months considerable trouble has been experienced with grass and weed growth. Hence, a municipality can make a considerable saving in not having to keep snow removed from around fire hydrants and also by not having to cut the grasses and weeds that grow during the warm months.

The invention also has for an object the provision of a marking device that may be left in place on the hydrant throughout the year, thereby cutting down the cost of installing the marking device before any given season.

A further object is to provide a marking device for fire hydrants that virtually eliminates the likelihood of the device being pilfered. In this respect, pilfering of marking devices in the past, particularly stakes, has been done by small children. While it is possible to remove the device constituting the present invention, nonetheless it is quite unlikely that children will have the necessary implement by which such a removal could be readily achieved.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a device of the foregoing character which will always remain upright or erect when the hydrant is not actually being used. On the other hand, it is an aim of the invention to permit ready bending of the marking device so that it will not afford any interference with the socket-type wrench usually used to open the hydrant. In other words, the marking device can be deflected downwardly so that it can be engaged under one of the outlets on the hydrant or any other projection that might be available, in this way being completely out of the path of the wrench handle during the period that the water is being turned on. No trouble whatsoever is experienced in releasing the marking device so that it will again spring into an upright position when the hydrant is no longer in use.

Also, the invention has for an object the provision of a device that will be directional in nature, a pennant or flag being utilized which is capable of pointing in a given direction, more specifically the large steamer connection. When the flag is so pointing the firemen will be immediately apprised of the direction in which the steamer connection is facing so that they can make the appropriate connection thereto.

Yet another object of the invention is to minimize maintenance costs, it being within the contemplation of the invention to fabricate a device that will be rust resisting and also to have a flag that is reflectorized so that it can not only be seen at night but which will not require repainting from time to time. With respect to the use of the reflectorized flag, it is also within the realm of practical use to employ some form of identifying indicia on the flag.

A further object of the invention is to provide a marking device for use in locating fire hydrants that can be manufactured at an extremely low cost. In this regard, it is within the purview of the invention to provide a one-piece construction as far as the connecting bracket, the mast or staff and the resilient or yieldable spring are concerned.

For further objects and advantages of the invention

and for a more detailed understanding of the invention, reference is to be had to the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing in which:

FIGURE 1 is a side elevational view of a fire hydrant having my marking installed thereon;

FIGURE 2 is a plan view corresponding to FIGURE 1, the reason for this view being to show very clearly the orientation of the flag with respect to the large steamer connection of the hydrant, and

FIGURE 3 is a perspective view of the upper portion of the hydrant appearing in FIGURE 1, but with the flag bent or deflected downwardly out of the way of the wrench that would be used when opening the hydrant for actual use.

Referring now in detail to the drawing, it is to be observed that the fire hydrant that has been selected has been indicated in its entirety by the reference numeral **10**. While fire hydrants do vary from design to design, it will be perceived that the depicted hydrant includes a cap **12** and a barrel **14** extending down into the ground which has been labeled **16**. The lower end of the cap **12** has an integral flange **18** and the upper end of the barrel **14** has a similar flange **20**. These flanges are coupled together by means of a plurality of bolts **22** extending completely through apertures provided in the flanges and which bolts have fixed to them a corresponding number of nuts **24**.

Describing the fire hydrant **10** in still more detail, it will be seen that the cap **12** is provided with a steamer connection **26** and a pair of oppositely directed small hose connections **28**. As a practical matter, the steamer connection is usually four and one-half inches in diameter and the small hose connections are two and one-half inches in diameter. For the purpose of turning on the hydrant there is furnished a valve nut **30**. This valve nut accommodates a large socket-type wrench so that the valve nut can be turned so as to open an internally housed valve. This is all quite conventional so further elaboration is not believed necessary.

The marking device itself which constitutes the present invention has been designated generally by the reference numeral **32**. The marking device **32** includes a normally upright staff or mast **34**. At the lower end of the mast is a plurality of integral coils **36** which collectively constitute a readily yieldable barrel spring. The lower end of the coil has a U-shaped mounting end which extends generally at right angles to the direction in which the mast **34** projects. The U-shaped mounting end **38** is visible in FIGURES 1 and 3, but is best seen in FIGURE 2. At the upper end of the mast **34** is a reflectorized pennant or flag member **40**.

The size of the mast **34** is not of importance to the invention. All that need be said is that the mast **34**, the coils **36** and the mounting end **38** are of unitary construction. In other words, the rod material is of integral construction and the coils **36** are formed from the original rod and the U-shaped end **38** is likewise formed from this single rod, being bent at right angles as shown in FIGURE 1. It should be distinctly observed, though, that the U-shaped end **38** extends in the same direction as does the pennant or flag **40**. This is of importance in mounting the device **32** so that the flag **40** will extend in a given direction. As indicated in FIGURE 2, the direction that is most desired is that the flag be angularly oriented so as to project in the same direction as the large steamer connection **26**.

The manner in which my marking device is used should be readily understandable from the information presented above. The installation is effected quite easily by merely loosening sufficiently one of the nuts **24** on the various flange bolts **22**. The particular nut **24** that has been resorted to in the present situation is the one directly

opposite from the large steamer connection **26**. When the particular nut **24** has been loosened enough, the U-shaped end **38** can be slipped thereunder and the nut again tightened. It is not necessary that the nut be completely removed by reason of the opening provided by the U-shaped configuration of the end **38**. It will be appreciated that when the nut **24** is firmly retightened it is rather difficult to be loosened unless the proper size wrench is applied thereto. This makes it exceedingly difficult for children to tamper with the marking device constructed in accordance with the teachings of this invention. By virtue of such a facile connection, the device **32** is virtually pilfer-proof.

After the device **32** has been installed as pictured in FIGURES 1 and 2, it will be discerned that the flag **40** will at all times point toward the steamer connection **26**. One important advantage of the marking device that I have devised lies in the fact that it will never be in the way when access is to be had to the valve nut **30**. When the socket-type wrench is applied to the nut **30**, the mast **34** can first very easily be deflected or bent downwardly into the position illustrated in FIGURE 3. It will be noted that there can be absolutely no interference with the wrench while it is being turned in order to open the valve controlled by the nut **30**. Yet when the firemen are through, the mast **34** can be disengaged and will immediately assume its upright position as seen in FIGURE 1. It is also of benefit to have an easily deflected marking device, for it will not be damaged by snow plows or other removal equipment should such equipment come in contact with the marker. Once the equipment has moved on, the mast **34** will again resume its vertical relationship just as when released from one of the small hose connections **28**.

It is to be understood, however, that even though there is herein shown and described a particular embodiment of the invention, the same is susceptible to certain changes fully comprehended by the spirit of the invention as herein described and within the scope of the appended claim.

What is claimed:

In combination:

(*a*) a fire hydrant having
(*b*) a steamer connection projecting therefrom in one lateral direction,
(*c*) a pair of additional hose connections projecting in opposite directions at right angles to said steamer connection, and
(*d*) a circular flange underlying said connections with
(*e*) a plurality of vertical flange bolts contained therein;
(*f*) a single rod element including
(*g*) a straight upright mast portion,
(*h*) an integral coil spring portion near the lower end of said mast portion, and
(*i*) an integral U-shaped portion extending laterally in one direction from the lower end of said spring portion and secured to the flange bolt opposite said steamer connection; and
(*j*) a flag member of sheet material at the upper end extending in a direction generally parallel to said U-shaped rod portion, whereby said flag member indicates the direction in which said steamer connection faces.

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