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(54) **CARPETING SYSTEMS, METHODS AND PRODUCTS**

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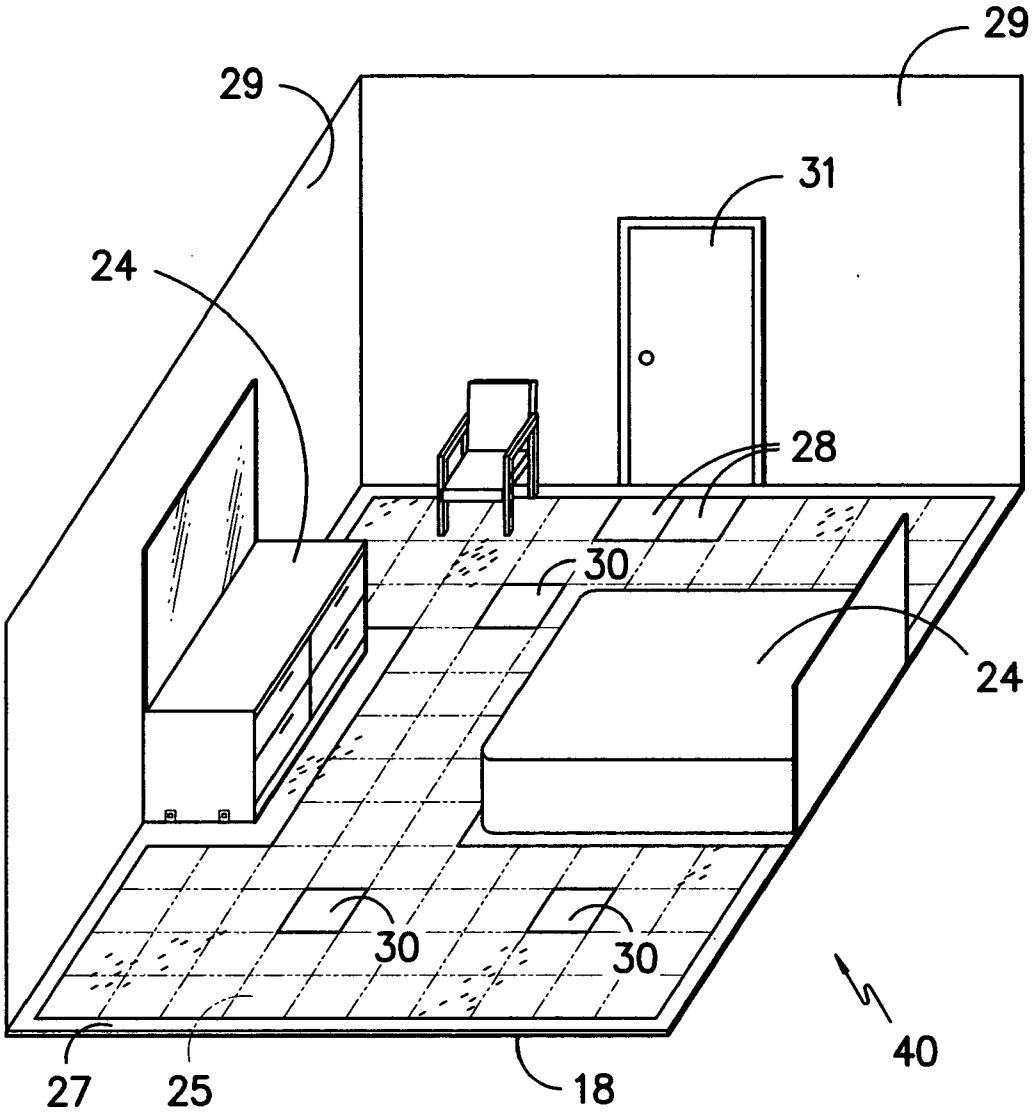
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A combination of modular floor covering and border strip materials which operate in cooperative relation to greatly reduce or eliminate the necessity and expense of trimming waste material from the floor covering being installed. A system for installation of floor covering elements is also provided.



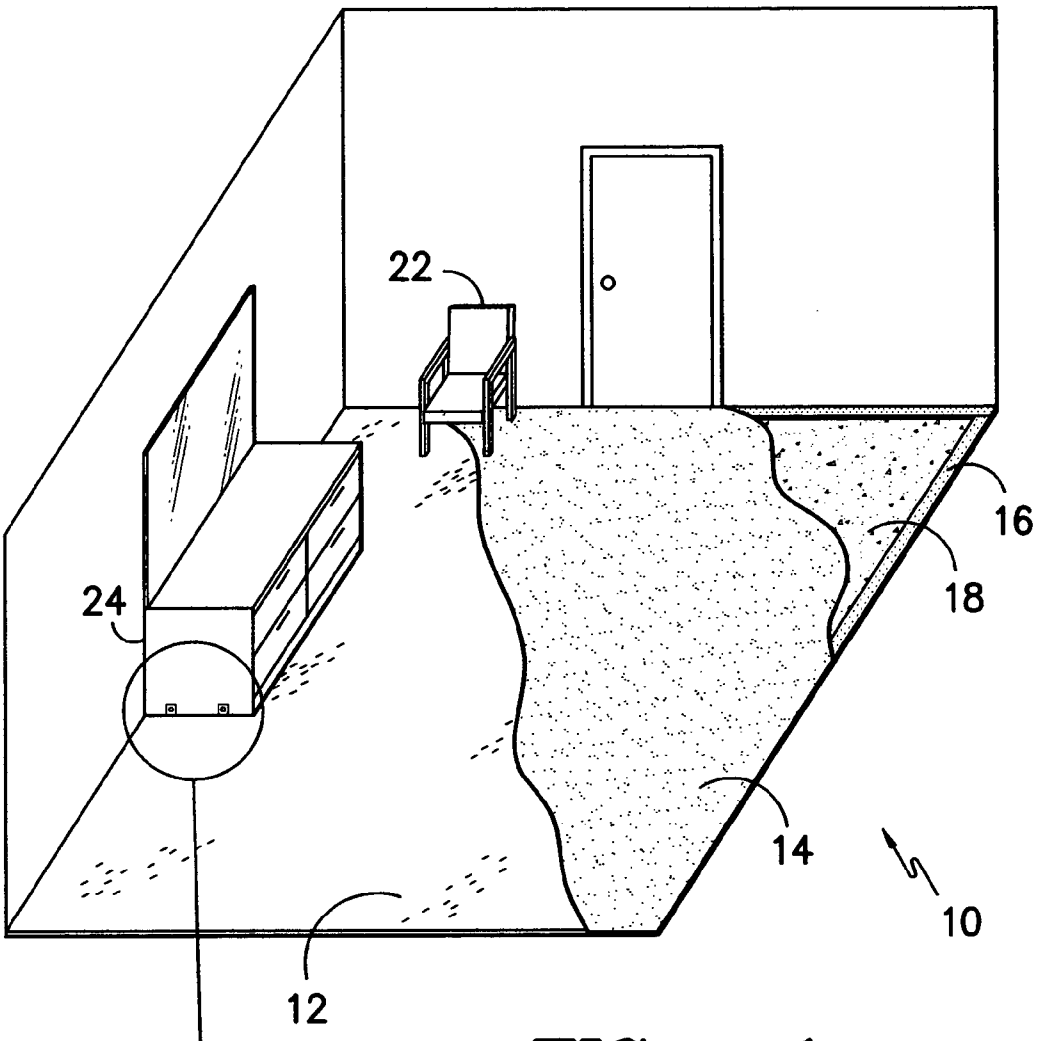


FIG. –1–
PRIOR ART

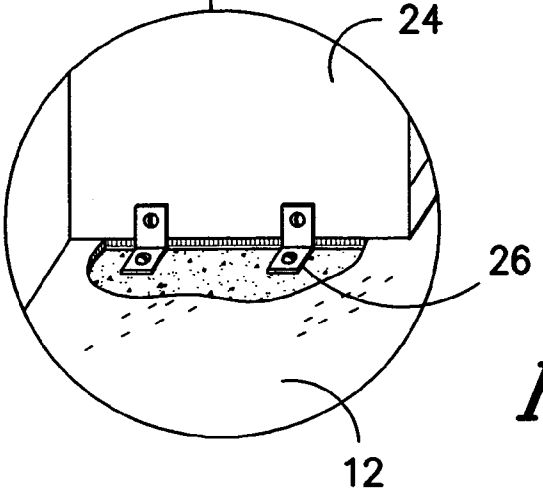


FIG. –1A–
PRIOR ART

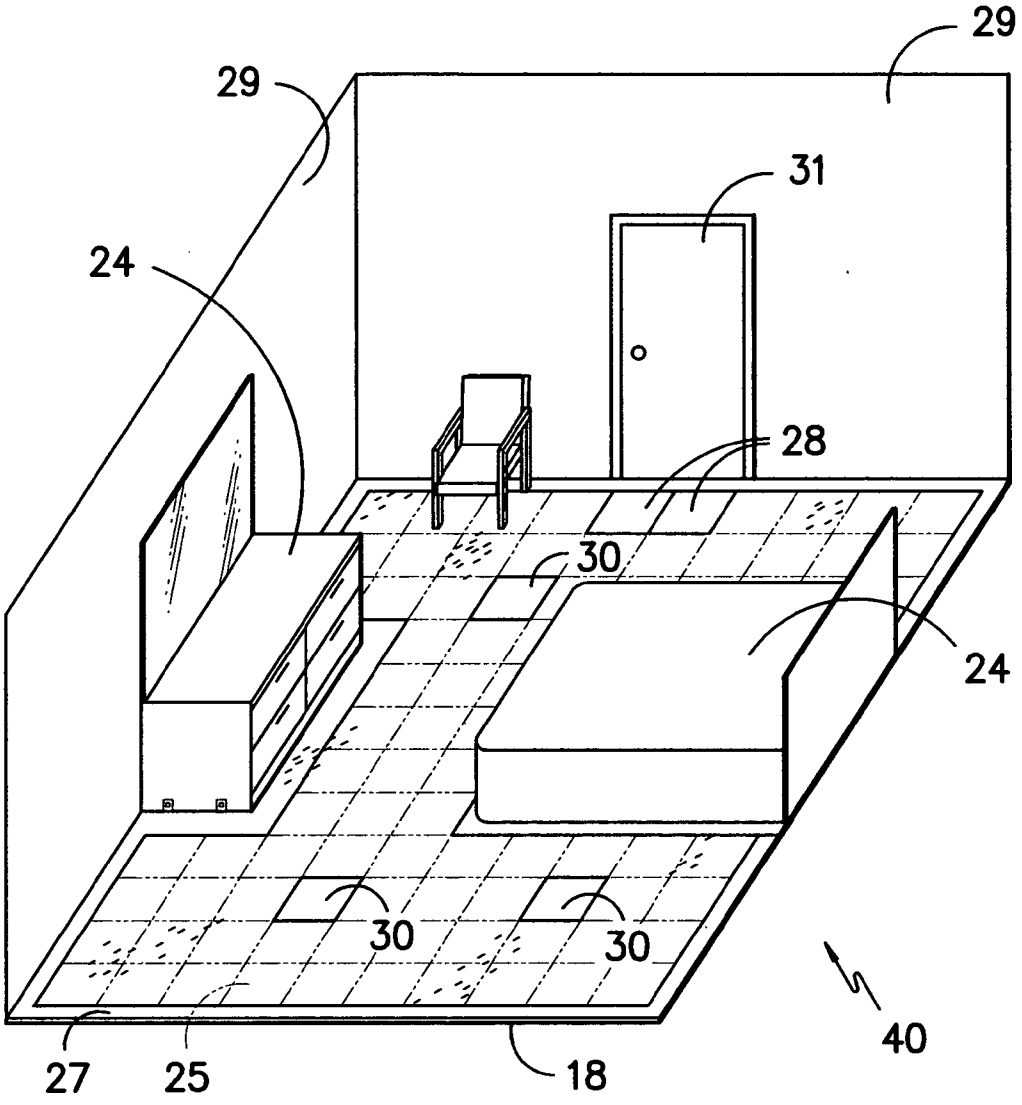


FIG. -2-

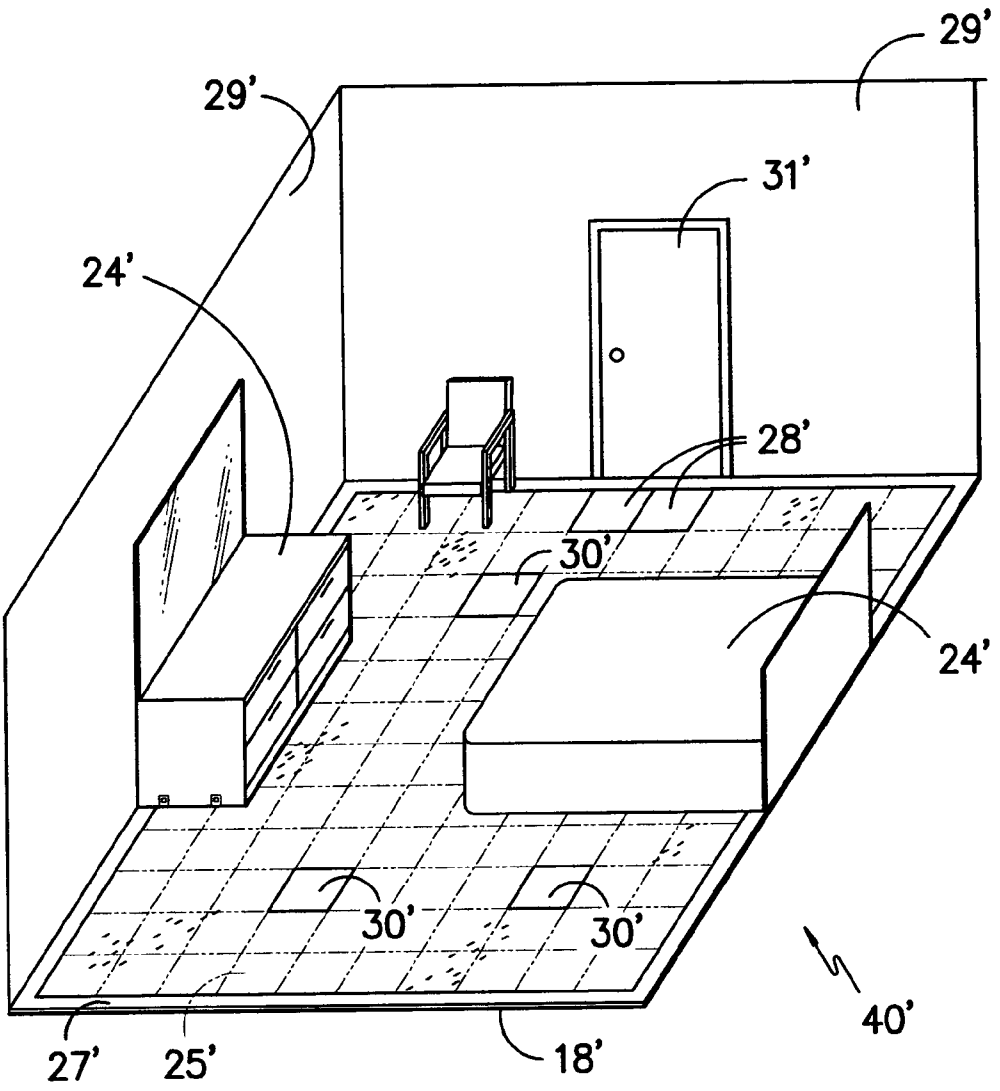


FIG. -2A-

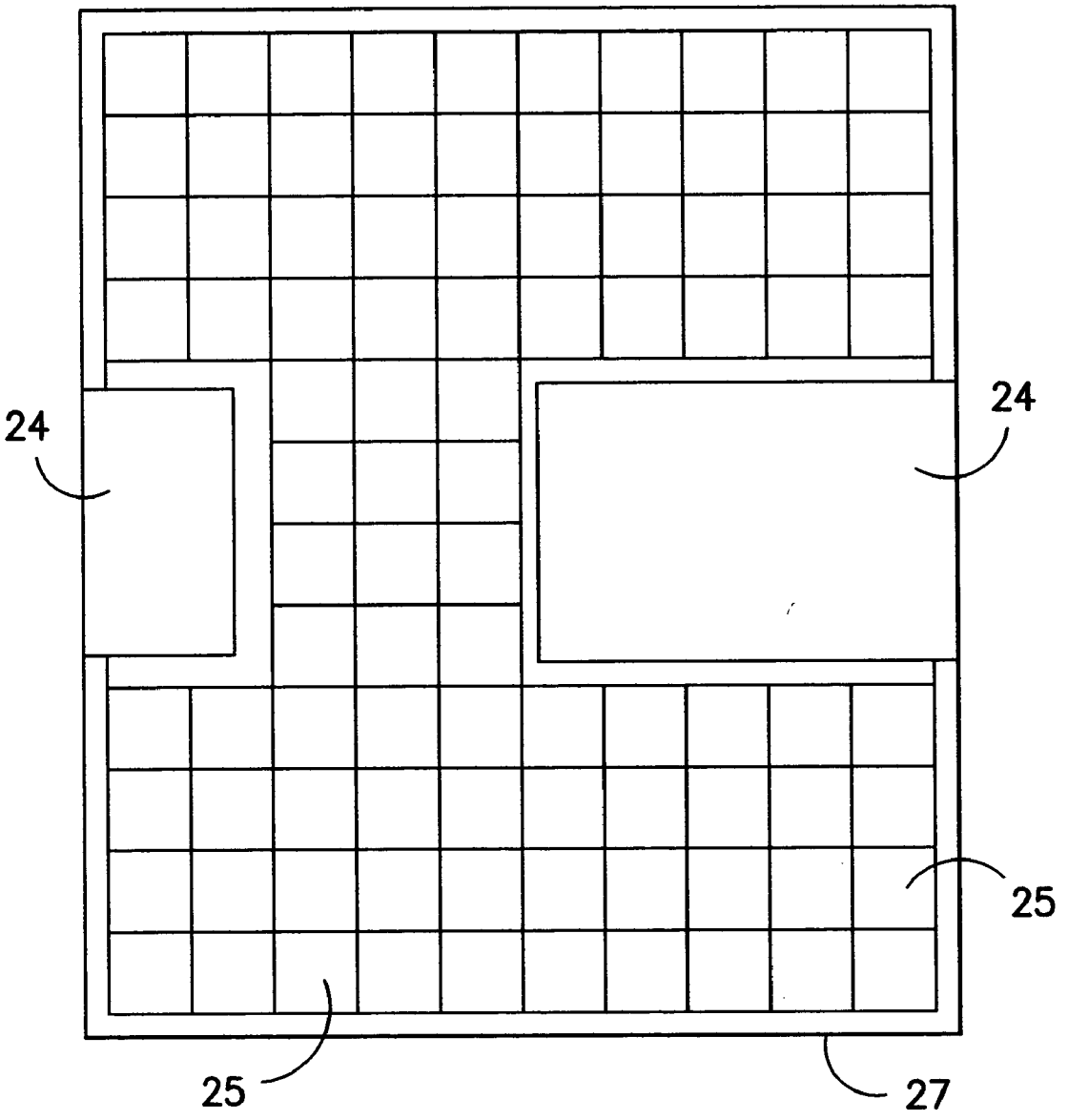


FIG. -3-

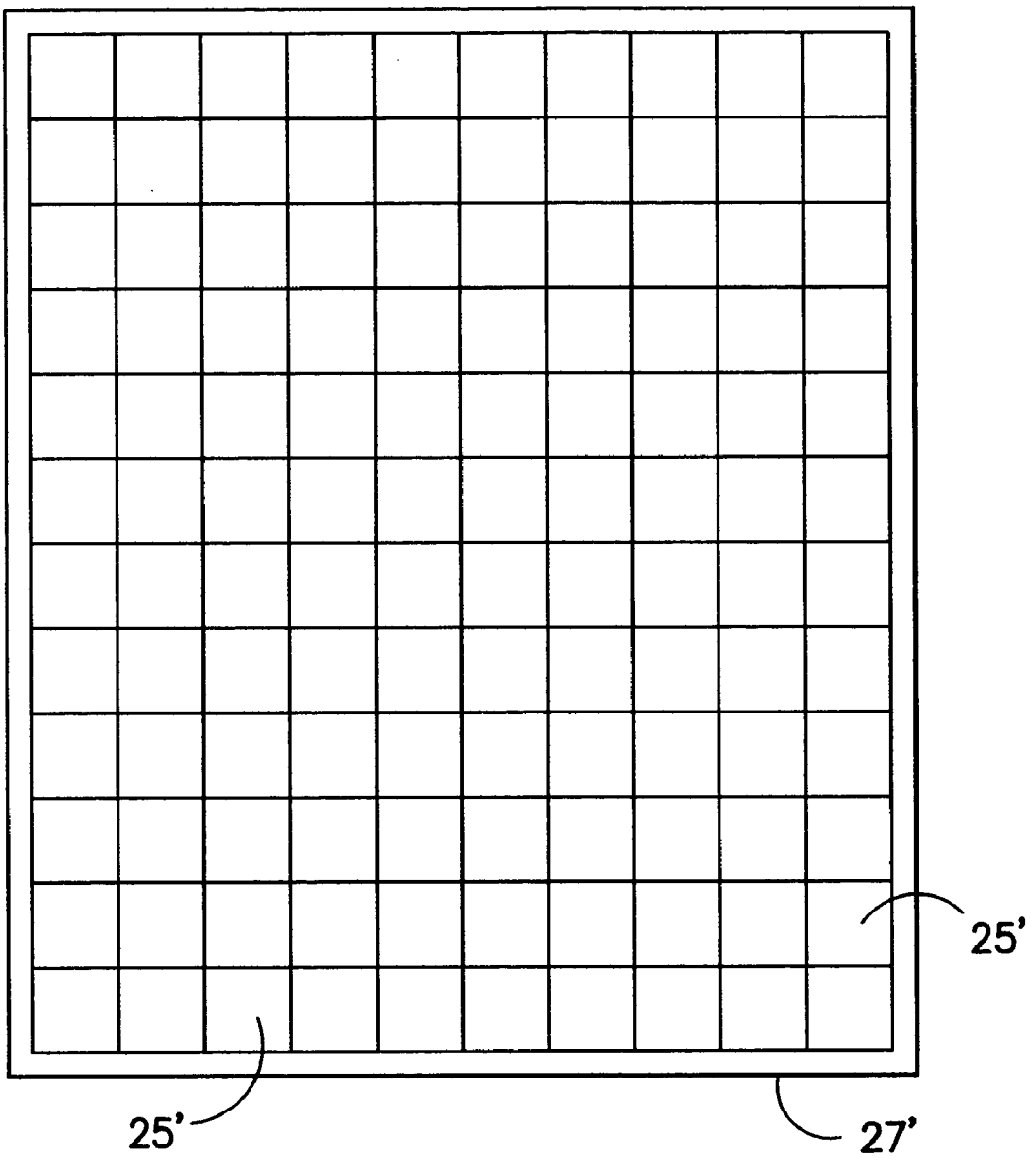


FIG. -3A-

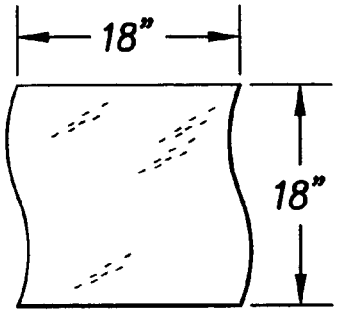


FIG. -4A-

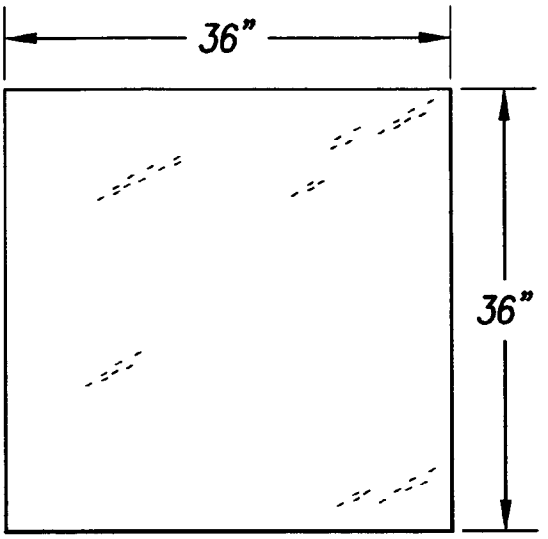


FIG. -4B-

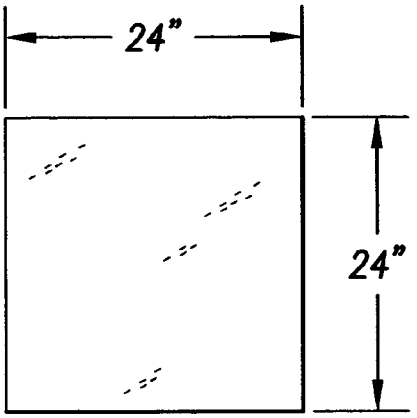


FIG. -4C-

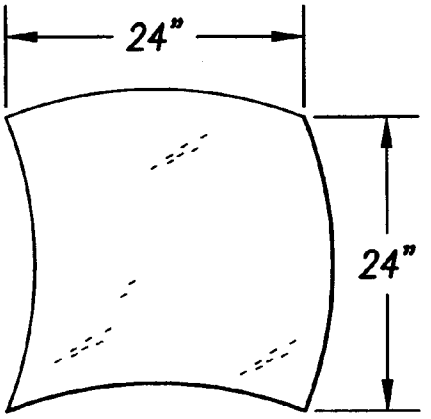


FIG. -4D-

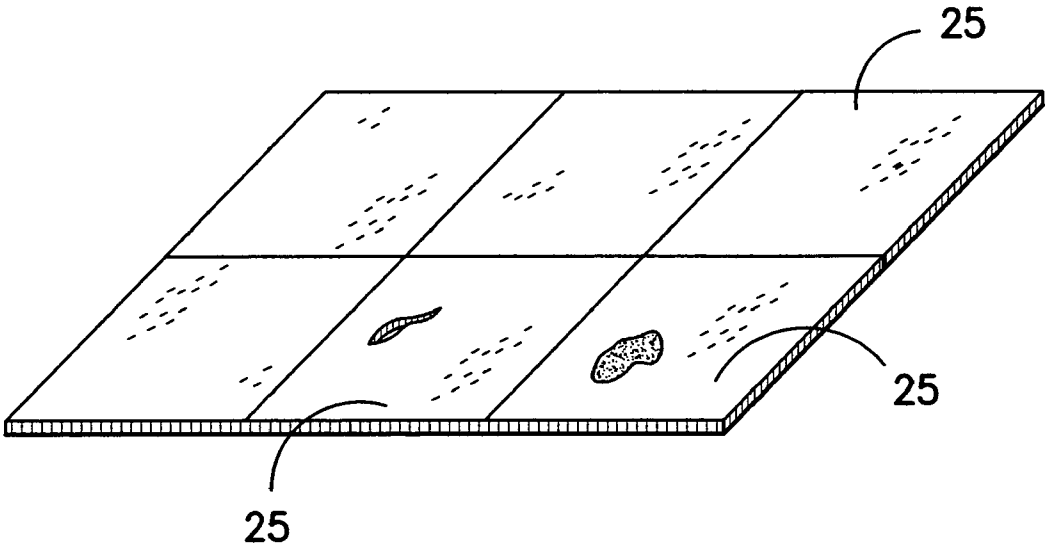


FIG. -5-

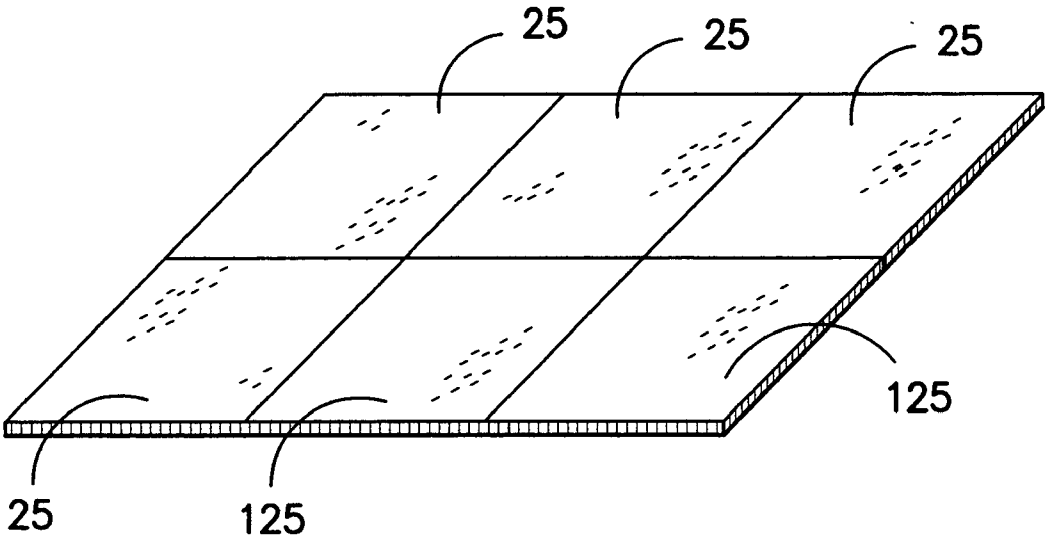


FIG. -6-

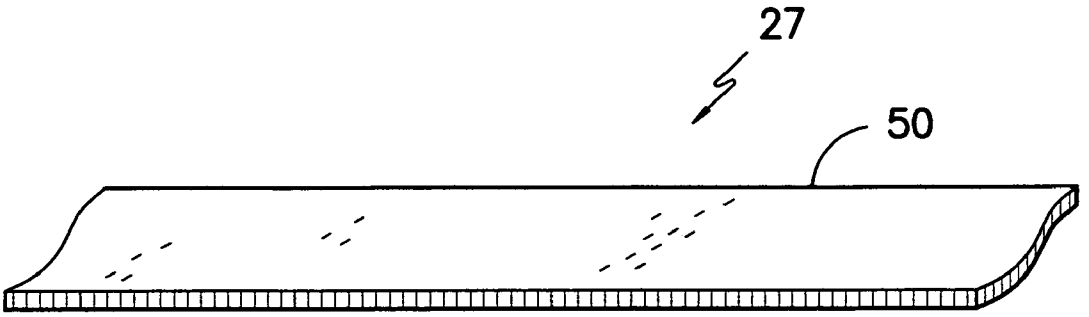


FIG. –7–

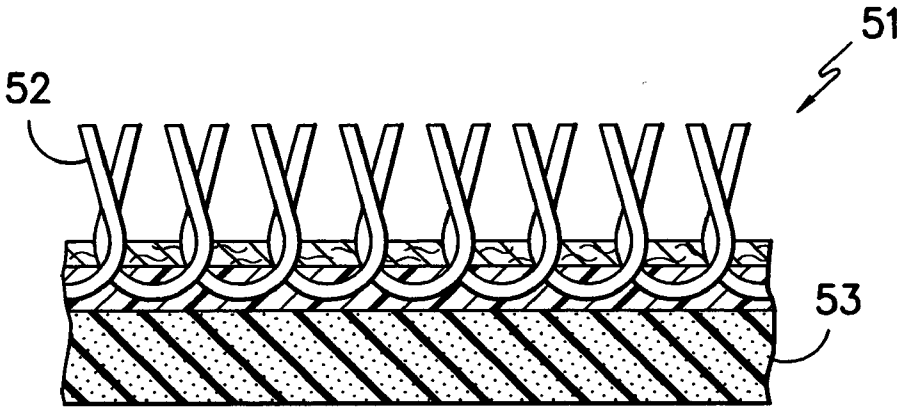


FIG. –7A–

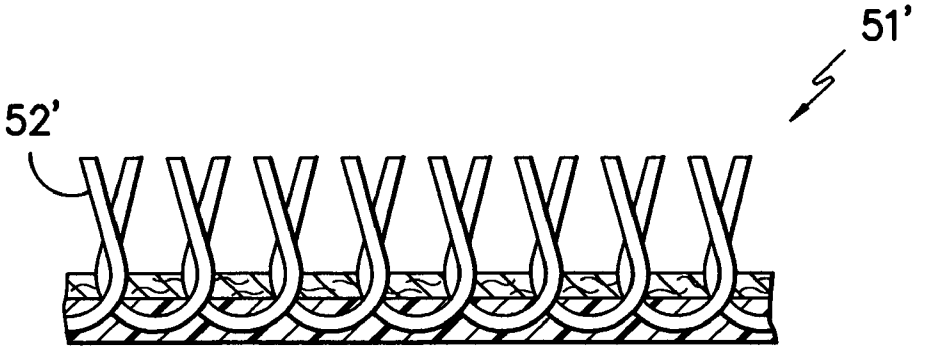


FIG. –7B–

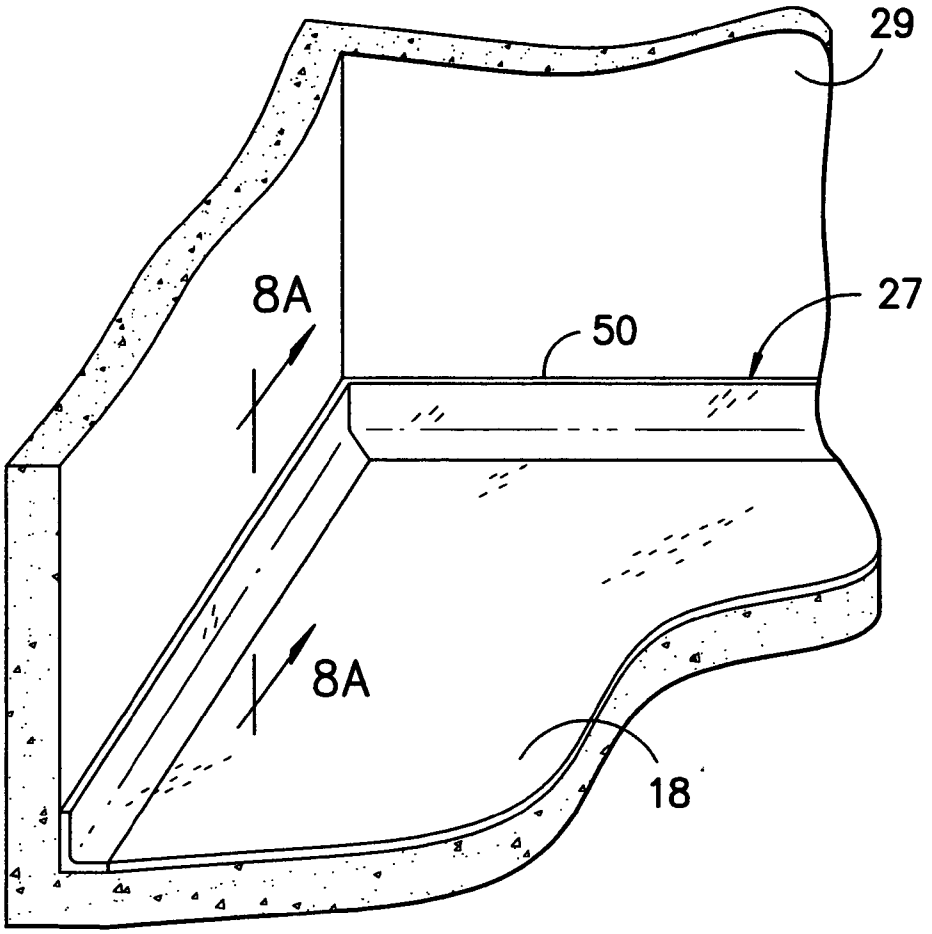


FIG. -8-

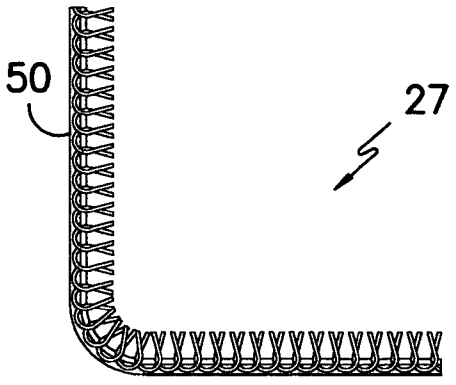


FIG. -8A-

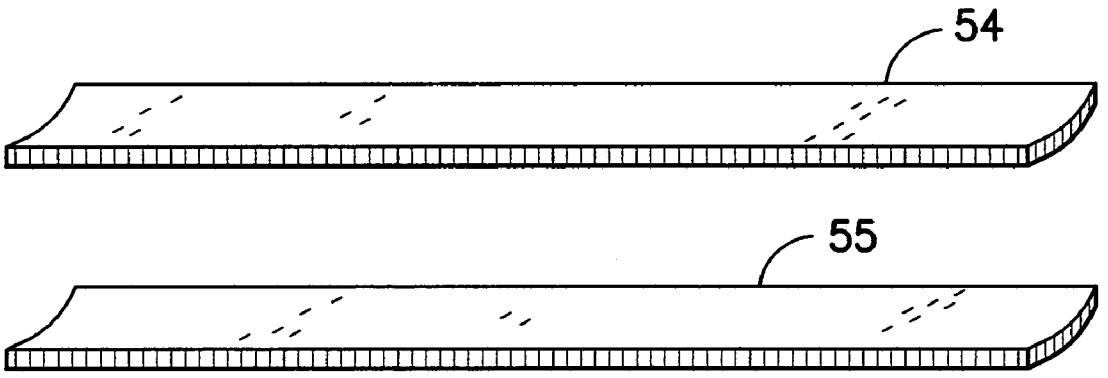


FIG. -9-

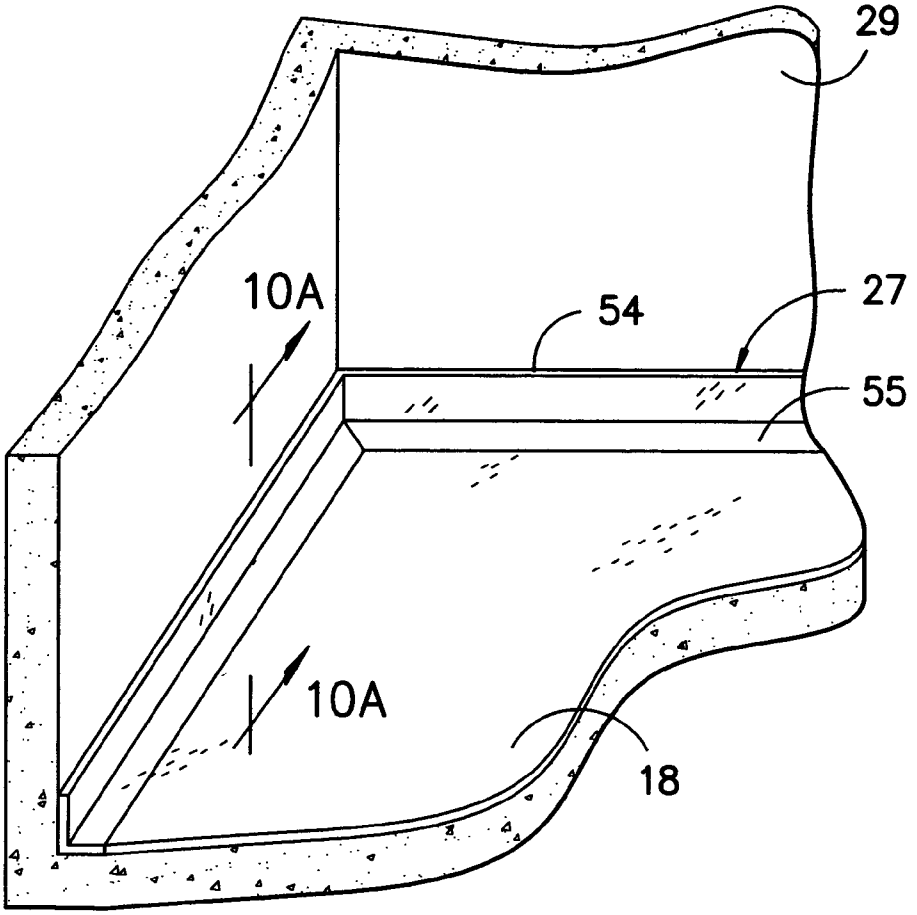


FIG. –10–

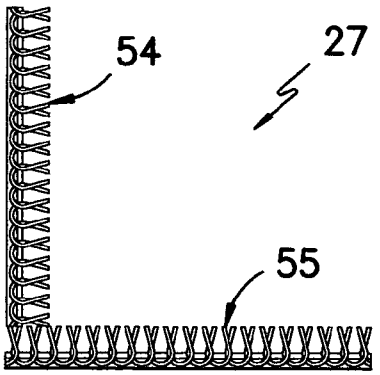


FIG. –10A–

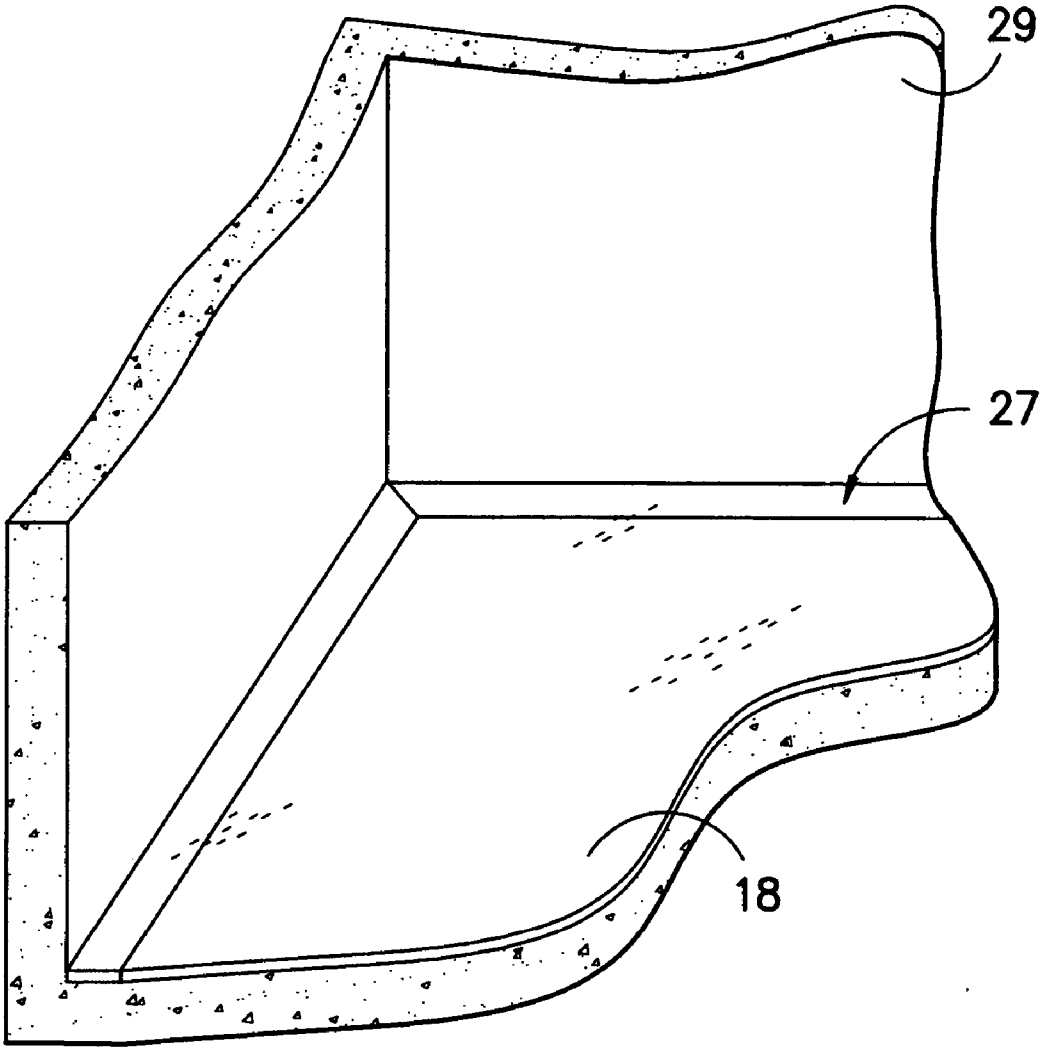


FIG. -11-

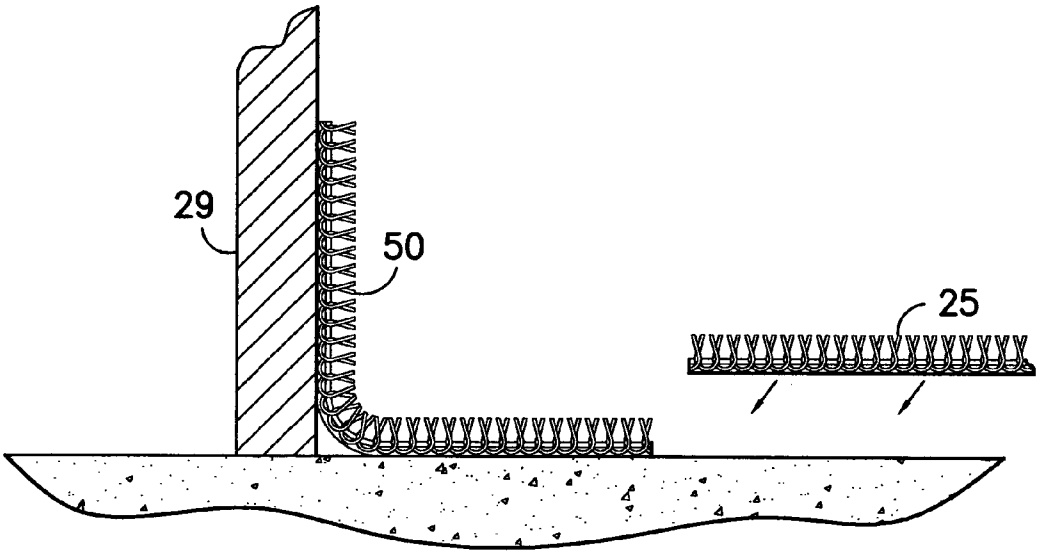


FIG. –12A–

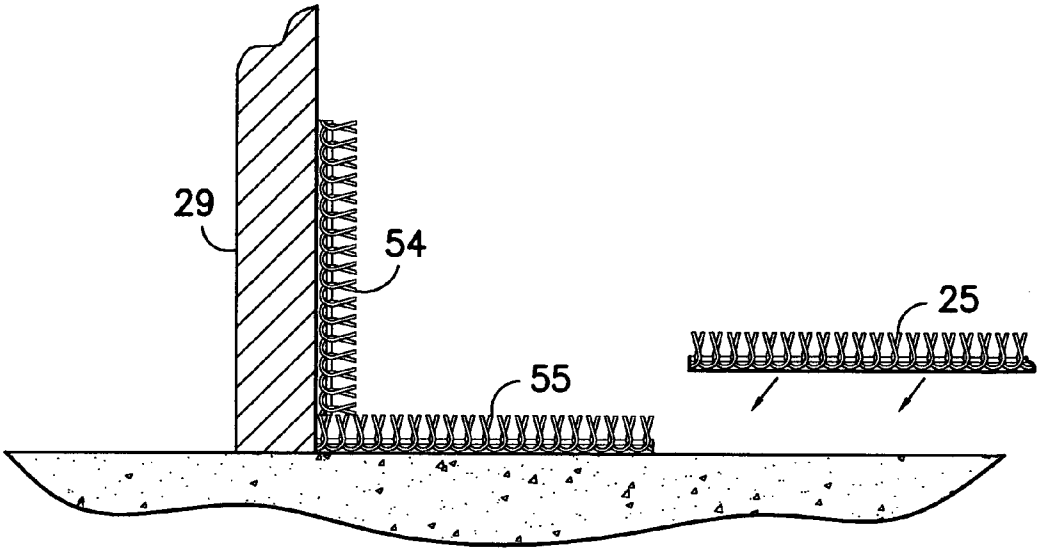


FIG. –12B–

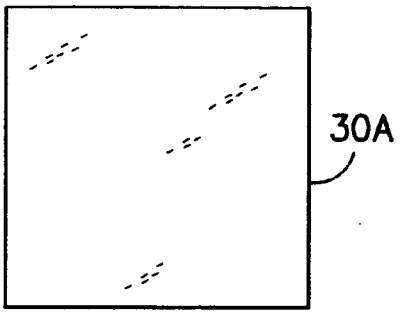


FIG. -13A-

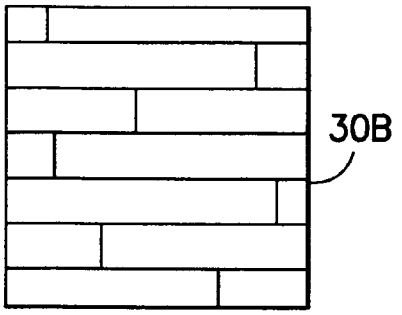


FIG. -13B-

FIG. -13C-

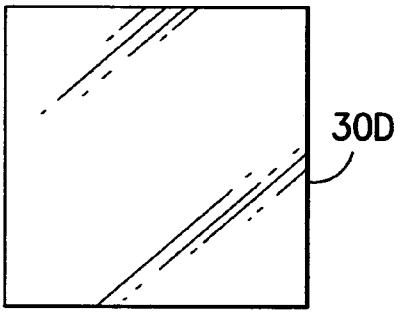


FIG. -13D-

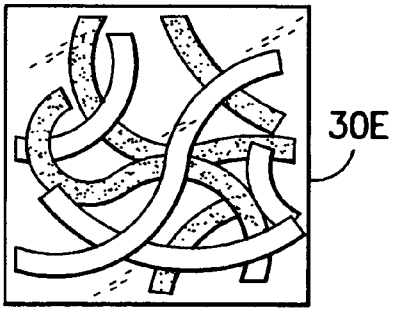


FIG. -13E-

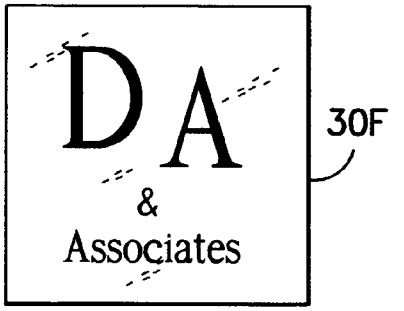


FIG. -13F-

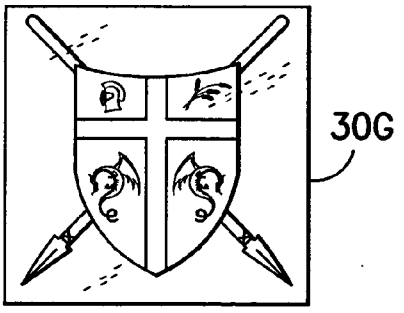


FIG. -13G-

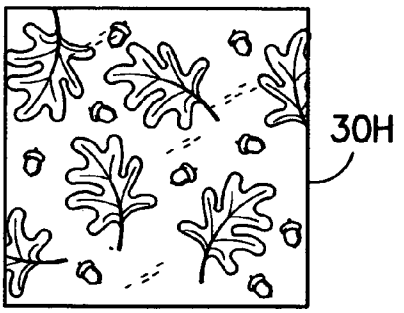


FIG. -13H-

CARPETING SYSTEMS, METHODS AND PRODUCTS

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates generally to floor covering installations and more particularly to systems incorporating cooperating perimeter edge strip elements and interior modular tile elements which are arranged within a room preferably with no cutting of the interior tile elements required. Additional entryway tiles and/or visually distinct insert tiles may also be incorporated if desired. Related methods of installation and finished, installed floor coverings are also provided.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] In the past, installation of floor coverings such as broadloom carpeting and the like has been carried out by highly skilled installers using a technique of stretching and tacking the floor covering material in place such as by the use of tack strips or the like to keep tension on the surface covering during installation and use. While such techniques have worked, their practice has been highly labor intensive requiring both substantial technical skill and physical exertion. Such typical broadloom installations generally also require the installation of a separate pad material such as fiber or foam rubber for disposition between the actual carpet and an underlying subfloor.

[0003] In addition to the complexities and difficulties associated with the initial installation of traditional carpet, such prior installations present still further difficulties if a subsequent need arises to repair and/or replace a portion of the previously installed flooring material after furniture has been located within the room. In particular, in order to effect such repair or replacement it is generally necessary to remove all furniture from the room and thereafter pull the previously installed flooring material away from the tack strips to permit removal from the subfloor. Even if only a small area of the flooring material has been damaged, it is often necessary to remove much larger portions of the floor covering material since such material is installed in a form having extended length and width dimensions. Once the former floor covering has been removed it is often necessary to repair or replace the original tack strips and to repeat the original labor intensive installation process. Only after the new installation is complete can the furniture be returned to the room. Thus, even a relatively small zone of damage may result in the need to expend substantial effort.

[0004] The difficulties associated with repair or replacement of previously installed flooring systems may be particularly acute in environments such as a hotel room (**FIG. 1**), an office environment or the like in which furniture is secured in fixed relation to the subfloor so as to prevent unauthorized removal or repositioning. In such an environment the replacement or repair of the previously installed floor covering material requires the additional effort associated with disengaging the furniture from the subfloor. Morever, in such environments the availability of storage space to house the removed furniture may be limited. Finally, during the period required to remove the furniture, disengage the former floor covering and install the replacement floor covering, the premises are unavailable for normal occupancy, thereby giving rise to a potential financial burden.

[0005] In recognition of the difficulties associated with both the original installation and subsequent replacement of traditional floor covering materials, there has been a trend towards products which are intended to be more efficient to install and/or replace. By way of example, one class of broadloom carpeting incorporates a pre-attached cushion so as to eliminate the need to separately install a cushion between the carpet and the subfloor. However such a broadloom carpet nonetheless requires the use of an installed tack strip or the like to retain its position. Thus, many of the difficulties associated with the original installation and replacement of such materials are retained. It is also known to utilize modular or tile products (either with or without a cushion backing) for disposition across a subfloor. While such modular installations successfully address many of the difficulties associated with the installation of broadloom products, such installations may nonetheless require the trimming of tile elements disposed along the perimeter of a room so as to conform an arrangement of tiles to the available space. As will be appreciated, the number of tiles which must be trimmed is dependent upon the perimeter length of the room. As will be further appreciated, in an environment such as a collection of hotel rooms or offices, the collective perimeter length relative to the collective area being covered may be quite substantial, thereby requiring that a large percentage of the tiles utilized be trimmed. Thus, if carpeting is to be applied across a large number of relatively small rooms, the collective trimming of tiles for those rooms may be prohibitively difficult. In light of such difficulties, the use of modular carpeting such as tiles has not heretofore gained broad acceptance in the marketplace for such installations.

[0006] In view of the foregoing, it will be appreciated that each of the known floor covering installation techniques and systems presents some deficiency with respect to use in relatively small spaces such as hotel rooms and the like. Hence, there exists a need for an improved method and system for placing or replacing desired floor coverings within environments including relatively small rooms having high perimeter to area ratios.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] In at least one embodiment, the present invention provides advantages and alternatives over the prior art by providing a combination of modular floor covering and border strip materials which operate in cooperative relation to greatly reduce or eliminate the necessity and expense of trimming waste material from the floor covering being installed. Moreover, the system eliminates the need for tack strips or other tensioning devices during installation or replacement. Moreover, the system provides substantial flexibility in eliminating or reducing the need to remove furniture during replacement of the floor covering products.

[0008] According to one aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention a method or system is provided for the installation and/or replacement of a floor covering using modular carpet tiles to cover an interior portion of a subfloor without the need to trim the carpet tiles and/or placing or replacing tack strips and/or padding.

[0009] According to another aspect of at least one embodiment of the invention a method or system is provided for replacing floor covering materials in a space without the

necessity of removing furnishings from the space but rather simply repositioning such furnishings to alternative zones within the space during a staged replacement process.

[0010] According to still another aspect of at least one embodiment of the invention a method or system is provided for installing floor covering tiles and/or border strip materials to the edge of fixed furniture without the necessity of moving the furniture or cutting the carpet tiles.

[0011] According to yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention a floor covering system is provided incorporating one or more specially designed entry tiles in conjunction with a cooperating arrangement of interior tiles and border strips.

[0012] According to yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention a floor covering system is provided incorporating one or more specially designed insert tiles in conjunction with a coordinated arrangement of interior tiles and border strips.

[0013] According to still another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention, a floor covering system is provided including a coordinated arrangement of interior tiles of predefined interlocking shapes in combination with border strips.

[0014] In accordance with yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention a method or system is provided for replacing one or more previously installed interior tile elements with replacement carpet tiles in coordinated relation to previously installed border strips.

[0015] According to still another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention, a method or system is provided for selectively replacing one or more message insert tiles and/or entry tiles in coordinated relation to previously installed interior tile elements without removal or replacement of such interior tile elements.

[0016] In accordance with still another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention a floor covering system or method is provided incorporating a border strip of unibody construction arranged in coordinated relation to an arrangement of cooperating interior tile elements.

[0017] According to still a further aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention a floor covering system or method is provided incorporating a border strip formed of multiple lengthwise pieces arranged along a perimeter portion of a room to be covered in a coordinated relation to an arrangement of interior tile elements.

[0018] According to yet a further aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention, a floor covering system or method is provided including a border strip having a first leg which extends away from the wall towards an arrangement of interior carpet tiles and a second leg which extends away from the floor at least partially up a wall or other vertical boundary surface.

[0019] According to still another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention a floor covering system or method is provided including the use of a border strip formed of broadloom carpeting or attached cushion broadloom carpeting in coordinated covering relation to an arrangement of interior carpet tiles.

[0020] According to another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present invention a floor covering system or method is provided including the installation of border strips on a floor at the junction of the floor and a fixed furniture base with the border strips being in cooperating floor covering relation to an arrangement of interior tiles.

[0021] Other aspects and advantages of the present invention will be apparent to those of skill in the art upon a reading of the following detailed description and/or through practice of the invention described therein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0022] The accompanying drawings which are incorporated in and which constitute a part of this specification illustrate various exemplary embodiments, practices, and procedures in accordance with the present invention and together with the detailed description set forth below serve to explain the principals of the invention wherein:

[0023] **FIG. 1** is a schematic perspective representation of a space such as a hotel room or the like covered in a typical broadloom carpet installation;

[0024] **FIG. 1A** is an enhanced partially cut away perspective view of a typical method of fixing furnishings to a subfloor;

[0025] **FIG. 2** is a schematic perspective representation of a space with fixed furniture illustrating an arrangement of floor-covering carpet elements including border strips, interior tiles, entry tiles, and message insert tiles installed in accordance with at least one embodiment of the present invention;

[0026] **FIG. 2A** is a view similar to **FIG. 2** but wherein the border strips follow the room perimeter and do not extend around the furniture;

[0027] **FIG. 3** is a schematic overhead view of an installation of the coordinated system of at least one embodiment of the present invention corresponding to the installation of **FIG. 2**, illustrating border strips installed along the room perimeter and around fixed furniture installations and further illustrating the arrangement of interior tiles installed without being cut to fit;

[0028] **FIG. 3A** is a schematic overhead view of an installation of the coordinated system of at least one embodiment of the present invention corresponding to the installation of **FIG. 2A**, wherein the border strips follow the room perimeter and do not extend around fixed furniture such that interior tile elements are disposed beneath installed furniture;

[0029] FIGS. **4**A-D are top plan views of exemplary shapes and sizes which may be utilized for interior tiles, entry tiles, and message insert tiles within a floor covering system according to at least one embodiment of the present invention;

[0030] **FIG. 5** is a schematic perspective illustration of an installation of interior tile elements having damaged or soiled tiles;

[0031] **FIG. 6** is a schematic perspective representation of the installation of **FIG. 5** after the damaged or soiled tiles have been replaced;

[0032] **FIG. 7** is a schematic perspective representation of an exemplary border strip of at least one embodiment of the present invention wherein the border strip is manufactured in a unibody construction;

[0033] **FIG. 7A** is a cut-away edge view of an exemplary carpet material for forming a border strip with attached cushion;

[0034] **FIG. 7B** is a view similar to **FIG. 7A** with no attached cushion;

[0035] **FIG. 8** is a schematic perspective view of a border strip according to at least one embodiment of the present invention of unibody construction extending along the intersection of a wall and floor in partial covering relation to the wall and floor;

[0036] **FIG. 8A** is a schematic cross sectional view of the border strip of **FIG. 8** taken along line **8A—8A** in **FIG. 8**;

[0037] **FIG. 9** is a schematic perspective representation of the components of a border strip according to at least one embodiment of the present invention manufactured in lengthwise two-piece fashion;

[0038] **FIG. 10** is a schematic perspective representation of a wall and floor installation of the border strip of **FIG. 9**;

[0039] **FIG. 10A** is a cross sectional view of the border strip of **FIG. 10** taken along line **10A—10A**;

[0040] **FIG. 11** is a schematic perspective representation of an installation of a one-piece border strip installed along a floor only at an intersection between a floor and a wall;

[0041] **FIG. 12A** is a cross section view showing an installed unibody constructed border carpet strip of **FIGS. 8 and 8A** and an adjacent interior carpet tile in exploded raised relation to a placement location adjacent the border strip;

[0042] **FIG. 12B** is a view similar to **FIG. 12A** illustrating an installed lengthwise two-piece constructed border carpet strip of **FIGS. 10 and 10A** and an adjacent interior carpet tile in exploded raised relation to a placement location adjacent the border strip; and

[0043] **FIGS. 13A-13H** are perspective top plan views of various designs, materials, and patterns incorporated on message insert tiles according to at least one embodiment of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0044] Representative practices, procedures and embodiments in accordance with the present invention will now be described in relation to the accompanying figures in which, like reference numerals are utilized to designate like components throughout the various views.

[0045] Turning to **FIG. 1**, a space **10** is illustrated incorporating a traditional carpet floor covering installation. In such a traditional installation a carpeting material such as broadloom carpet **12** is installed in covering relation to an underlay padding **14** in covering relation to a subfloor **18**. As will be appreciated, the subfloor **18** may be formed of a wide array of materials including wood, concrete, raised access paneling, or the like as will be well known to those of skill in the art. As illustrated, an arrangement of tack strips **16** is disposed around the perimeter of the space **10** being carpeted so as to hold the carpet **12** in tension following installation. After installation of the carpet system furniture may be introduced into the space **10**. As will be appreciated, such furniture such as a chair **22** or the like may be adapted for discretionary repositioning by the occupants of the space **10**. The furniture installation may also include one or more affixed furniture pieces **24** which are secured at a substantially fixed position within the space **10**. Such fixed furniture installations may be particularly desirable in hotel and office environments wherein a standardized orientation of individual furniture pieces is desirable to facilitate uniform appearance and systematic cleaning.

[0046] As illustrated in **FIG. 1A**, in a typical installation of affixed furniture pieces **24**, an arrangement of brackets **26** is used to secure the affixed furniture pieces **24** across the subfloor **18**. The portions of the brackets extending away from the affixed furniture pieces **24** may thereafter be covered by the carpet **12** and/or underlay padding **14** so as to hide the attachment. Thus, in such installations, the base of the affixed furniture pieces **24** typically rests on top of the carpet **12**. Thus, in the event that there is a need to replace the carpet **12** the affixed furniture pieces **24** must be unbolted from the subfloor and relocated prior to replacement. Since the carpet is in large pieces, such removal is often necessary even if the damaged portion of carpeting is outboard of the furniture item.

[0047] **FIG. 2** illustrates a space **40** such as a hotel room or the like incorporating a floor covering installation formed from a multiplicity of cooperating modular tile elements **25** adapted to cover an interior portion of the space **40** inboard of a border strip **27** which extends at least partially along the perimeter of the space **40** at the intersection between the subfloor **18** and walls **29**. As illustrated, it is contemplated that the border strip may also extend in a path substantially around one or more affixed furniture pieces **24** so as to define a border between the modular tile elements **25** and the base of such affixed furniture pieces **24**. Thus, in such a floor covering system the border strip **27** will travel in a path around such affixed furniture pieces. However, as illustrated in **FIG. 2A** (wherein like elements are designated by like reference numerals with a prime) it is also contemplated that the border strip **27'** may travel in a path substantially coextensive with the subfloor perimeter.

[0048] As best illustrated through simultaneous reference to **FIGS. 2 and 3** and **2A** and **3A** respectively, regardless of whether the border strips extend in a pattern around fixed furniture pieces **24** or remain adjacent to the walls **29**, the width of the border strips is preferably selected such that the interior modular tile elements **25**, **25'** may be placed across the interior of the space **40**, **40'** without the need to substantially trim or otherwise adjust the dimensions of the tile elements **25**, **25'** from their original dimensions as manufactured. Thus, according to the potentially preferred practice each of the modular tile elements **25**, **25'** is preferably of the same size after installation is complete.

[0049] An example of the steps in an exemplary process for the installation of flooring in **FIG. 3A** is:

[0050] 1) Measure the distance between the parallel wall structures in the room. This will yield the 2 full wall-to-wall measurements for the room in **FIG. 3A** (WTW1, WTW2).

[0051] 2) Divide each measurement from#1 above by the length or width size of the carpet tile being used (as an example only: 24"×24").

[0052] WTW1"/24"=Y.AA tiles needed where Y will represent the number of full tiles and ".AA" will represent the total strip size needed.

[0053] 3) Strip size ".AA" FROM #2 above is converted to inches.

[0054] .AA×24"=BB inches of strip total BB"/2 walls=CC" of strip on floor for each wall

[0055] 4) If CC" is<4" (which is the minimum desirable strip width on a floor strip for the WTW **1** dimension would be either

[0056] CC", if cc">or=to 4" (or)

[0057] CC"+12", if CC"<4"

[0058] 5) Repeat steps 2 through 4 for the other wall-to-wall direction measurement (WTW **2**).

[0059] 6) Install strips around perimeter walls in the width(s) calculated and then install interior carpet tiles in full tile increments.

[0060] As illustrated, it is contemplated that the coverage by the interior modular tile elements **25**, **25'** across the interior of the space **40** may be interrupted by selectively placed tile elements of different construction and/or appearance. In particular, it is contemplated that the floor covering system may include one or more entry way tiles **28**, **28'** located at a threshold of an entry way door **31**, **31'**. By way of example only, and not limitation, it is contemplated that such entry way tiles **28**, **28'** may be formed of a material of enhanced durability and/or stain resistance relative to the interior modular tile elements **25**, **25'** so as to provide a convenient localized collection point for moisture, dirt and other debris which may be adhered to a user's shoes as he or she enters the space.

[0061] As illustrated it is also contemplated that the floor covering installation may include one or more selectively placed insert or message tile elements **30**, **30'** at locations across the interior of the space. Preferably, such insert tiles **30**, **30'** have a shape which is substantially equivalent to that of the interior modular tile elements **25**, **25'** covering the remainder of the interior. However, the insert tiles **30**, **30'** will preferably be visually distinct from the surrounding interior tile elements **25**, **25'**. By way of example, such insert tiles may be formed from materials different from the interior tile elements **25**, **25'** and/or may be printed with different colors, designs, logos, safety information, or other data for viewing by an occupant.

[0062] It is contemplated that the interior modular tile elements **25**, **25'** the border strips **27**, **27'** as well as any entry way tiles **28**, **28'** and insert tiles **30**, **30'** which may be used may be formed from a wide range of materials and combinations of materials as are known to be suitable for floor covering installations. By way of example only, and not limitation, it is contemplated that any of the tile and/or strip elements may be formed from materials such as carpeting, hardback or cushion back carpet tiles, pieces or portions of such carpet tiles, broadloom, attached cushion broadloom, hardwood flooring, laminate flooring, vinyl flooring, ceramics, granite, marble, and other materials as may be known to those of skill in the art. It is also to be appreciated that such materials may be used in combination with one another within the installation. That is, a border strip of one material may be used in combination with interior modular tile elements of another material. Likewise, interior modular tile elements of different materials such as carpet and ceramic, carpet and wood, wood and ceramic and the like may be used.

[0063] While the present invention is in no way limited to the use of one or more materials, according to one potentially preferred practice it is contemplated that at least a portion of the interior modular tile elements **25**, **25'** will be carpet tiles. Such carpet tiles may be formed according to any of the practices as will be well known to those of skill in the art and may include tufted, bonded, woven, knit or non-woven face constructions. Such carpet tiles may employ any number of different backing layers including cushioning or rigid backing materials as will be well known to those of skill in the art. Such tiles may also include various releasable adhesives or other friction enhancing coatings to facilitate placement across the underlying subfloor. In the event that carpet tiles are used as the interior modular tile elements **25**, **25'** it is contemplated that the face layer of such carpet tile may be of any suitable known construction including, but not limited to loop pile, cut pile, and combinations of cut and loop pile with pile heights preferably ranging from about 1/64 inch to about 1.5 inches or greater.

[0064] The message or insert tiles **30**, **30'** may likewise be carpet tiles. However, as previously indicated, it is also contemplated that other materials such as ceramics, wood, vinyl, laminates and the like may be used in construction of the insert tiles. Preferably, such insert tiles are provided with an appearance that is different from that of the interior modular tile elements forming the body of the interior installation so as to provide a desired decorative pattern. By way of example only, and not limitation, **FIGS. 13A-13H** illustrate various representative insert tiles which may be used in combination with surrounding carpet tile elements **25**, **25'** at the interior of the space being covered. Thus, in **FIG. 13A** the insert tile **30**A is simply a carpet tile of a preselected color which may be different from that of the surrounding tiles. In **FIG. 13B**, the insert tile **30**B is printed with a brick design. In **FIG. 13C** the insert tile **30**C is printed with a stone design. In **FIG. 13D**, the insert tile **30**D is formed of wood or wood veneer. In **FIG. 13E**, the insert tile **30**E is printed with a geometric pattern. In **FIG. 13F**, the insert tile **30**F is printed with a corporate logo. In **FIG. 13G** the insert tile **30**G is printed with a family crest. In **FIG. 13H**, the insert tile **30**H is printed with a floral pattern. Of course, such patterns are merely representative and may be used either alone or in combination with other insert tiles to provide a desired visual effect.

[0065] It is also contemplated that the modular tile elements disposed across the interior of the space being covered may have various sizes and shapes. That is, the present invention is in no way limited to a single tile dimension. Thus, by way of example only, a sample of contemplated sizes and shapes for the interior modular tile elements is provided in **FIGS. 4A, 4B**. However, it is to be understood that in a given installation each of the tiles will preferably be of the same size and shape so as to reduce complexity.

[0066] As previously indicated, the border strip **27**, **27'** which is utilized may be of any suitable material or com-

bination of materials. By way of example only, such border strips may include wood or stone inlays, rubber boundary strips or carpet strip arrangements. According to one potentially preferred practice, the border strip may be formed from a unitary strip **50** of material such as traditional broadloom carpet. Of course, it is to be understood that similar constructions may be used for border strips **27'** in installations where the border strips outline affixed furniture. By way of example only, and not limitation, an exemplary cross sectional construction of a tufted broadloom carpet **51** including a pile surface **52** and an attached cushion layer **53** is provided in **FIG. 7A**. Likewise, a tufted broadloom carpet **51'** having a pile surface **52'** with no attached cushion is illustrated in **FIG. 7B**. Of course, carpets having face constructions other than tufted configurations such as bonded, woven, knit and non-woven constructions may likewise be used. As will be appreciated, such materials may be readily formed into an elongate strip construction as illustrated in **FIG. 7** by cutting techniques as will be well known to those of skill in the art.

[**0067**] Referring to **FIGS. 8 and 8A**, one contemplated arrangement for a border strip **27** formed from a unitary strip of carpet **50** is illustrated. As shown, in this construction the unitary elongate strip **50** is folded into a generally open "L" shaped geometry for placement along the intersection between the subfloor **18** and an adjacent vertical boundary surface such as the edge of affixed furniture **24** or a wall element **29**. In this arrangement a first leg of the border strip **27** projects away from the vertical boundary surface while a second leg extends partially up the vertical boundary surface projecting away from the subfloor. Interior modular tile elements may thereafter be placed in adjacent relation to the edge of the first leg so as to establish a substantially continuous covering across the subfloor as illustrated in **FIG. 12A**.

[**0068**] It is also contemplated that the border strip **27, 27'** may be formed from multiple pieces of cooperating material rather than as a single unitary structure. As illustrated in **FIG. 9**, according to one contemplated practice two elongate strips of carpeting material **54, 55** as previously described may be used to form the individual legs of the border strip. Such an installation is illustrated in **FIGS. 10 and 10A**. As will be appreciated, such a construction for the border strips **27** may facilitate the development of a sharp corner for insertion at the intersection between the subfloor **18** and an adjacent vertical boundary surface which may be desirable in some instances. Morever, such a multi-pieced construction permits the legs of the border strip **27** to be formed of different materials which may be desirable in some instances. Of course, as with the prior described construction an arrangement of interior modular tile elements may be placed in adjacent relation to the horizontal leg of the border strip to establish a substantially continuous covering relation across the subfloor **(FIG. 12B)**.

[**0069**] While it may be desirable in many instances to utilize a border strip of "L" shaped construction, it is also contemplated that the edge strip **27, 27'** may be substantially planar such that it extends away from the vertical boundary surface across the subfloor but does not include a vertical leg element. Such an installation is illustrated in **FIG. 11**.

[**0070**] As previously indicated, the present invention provides substantial advantages in relation to the repair and/or replacement of the floor covering material following the initial installation. By way of illustration, in **FIG. 5** there is illustrated an arrangement of interior modular tile elements **25** such as may be disposed inboard of a surrounding border strip in the manner previously described. As shown, in the arrangement of interior modular tile elements **25** two of such tile elements are illustrated as being stained or damaged. As shown in **FIG. 6**, such stained or damaged tile elements may be replaced by replacement tile elements **125** without the need for replacement of any surrounding or adjacent tile elements and with no need to reposition or remove furniture. Insert tiles **30** may likewise be inserted and replaced as desired such as to periodically change a message imprinted thereon. Moreover, the entire floor covering installation may be easily replaced in a staged manner by repositioning furniture within the space as necessary to gain access to the tile elements and then placing new tile elements in place. That is, it is generally unnecessary to remove the furniture from the space during replacement of floor covering installations in accordance with the present invention. Thus, after an installation is made according to the present invention, repair and/or replacement may be effected with minimal effort.

[**0071**] The present invention also substantially facilitates the ability to place floor covering materials around affixed furniture pieces so as to avoid the use of carpeting in locations beneath such furniture which will be invisible to a user. Such installation is achieved by the patterning of border strips around such affixed furniture pieces in a manner such as is illustrated in **FIGS. 2 and 3**. In the past, such selective patterning of floor coverings has been difficult due to the need to apply tack strips at the interface between such fixed furniture and the edge of the floor covering materials.

[**0072**] While the invention has been illustrated and described in relation to certain embodiments, constructions and procedures, it is to be understood that such embodiments, constructions and procedures are illustrative only and that the present invention is in no event to be limited thereto. To the contrary it is contemplated that modifications and variations embodying the principles of this invention will no doubt occur to those of skill in the art and it is thus intended that the present invention shall extend to all such modifications and variations as may incorporate the broad principles of the invention within the full spirit and scope thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for installation of a floor covering comprising the steps of:

installing one or more border carpet strips; and,

installing one or more interior carpet tiles across an interior flooring space inboard of the border carpet strips, wherein said border carpet strips project towards the interior floor space a distance such that the interior carpet tiles are installed without edge trimming.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein one or more entry carpet tiles are used at ingress and egress points in the space.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein one or more message carpet tiles are inserted at predefined locations in the space.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the interior carpet tiles are of any one of several sizes and shapes.

5. A floor covering installation produced by the method of claim 1.

6. A method for the installation of floor covering material in a space having a bare sub floor comprising the steps of:

installing one or more border carpet strips and installing one or more interior carpet tiles inboard of said border carpet strips, such that the placement of floor covering material is accomplished without the necessity of cutting the interior carpet tiles or placing tack strips or padding.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein one or more pieces of fixed furniture is installed prior to the installation of border carpet strips and wherein the border carpet strips extend around the edges of said fixed furniture at the junction of the sub floor and fixed furniture.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein one or more entry carpet tiles are used at ingress and egress points in the space.

9. The method of claim 6, wherein one or more message carpet tiles are inserted at predefined locations in the space.

10. The method of claim 6, wherein the interior carpet tiles are of any one of several sizes and shapes.

11. A carpet tile installation produced by the method of claim 6.

12. A method for the installation of carpeting in a space where the space is initially carpet free comprising the steps of:

installing border carpet strips and installing interior carpet tiles in inboard adjacent relation to the border carpet strips such that the installation of the interior carpet tiles is accomplished without cutting the interior carpet tiles or placing tack strips or padding.

13. The method according to claim 12, wherein at least a portion of the border carpet strips are substantially "L" shaped having a first leg projecting across a flooring support away from a vertical boundary surface and a second leg projecting away from the first leg up the vertical boundary surface.

14. The method according to claim 13, wherein said at least a portion of the border carpet strips are of one piece construction.

15. The method according to claim 13, wherein said at least a portion of the border carpet strips are of multi-piece construction.

16. The method according to claim 6, wherein at least a portion of the border carpet strips are substantially "L" shaped having a first leg projecting across a flooring support away from a vertical boundary surface and a second leg projecting away from the first leg up the vertical boundary surface.

17. The method according to claim 16, wherein said at least a portion of the border carpet strips are of one piece construction.

18. The method according to claim 16, wherein said at least a portion of the border carpet strips are of multi-piece construction.

19. The method according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the border carpet strips are substantially "L" shaped having a first leg projecting across a flooring support away from a vertical boundary surface and a second leg projecting away from the first leg up the vertical boundary surface.

20. The method according to claim 19, wherein said at least a portion of the border carpet strips are of one piece construction.

21. The method according to claim 19, wherein said at least a portion of the border carpet strips are of multi-piece construction.

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