

Electric Kettle having LED Temperature Indication through Water

Background of the Invention

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The present invention relates to electric kettles. More particularly, although not exclusively, the invention relates to an electric kettle having coloured LEDs for indicating water temperature through water in the kettle and visible through a kettle window.

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Modern electric kettles have a power-indicating light - often associated with an ON-OFF switch. The light simply illuminates when the heating element is energised, and goes out when boiling occurs and the heating element is de-energised. A problem with such known kettles is that it is not possible to determine visually how long it might take for the water in the kettle to boil.

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It is known to provide electric kettles with a see-through window to provide an indication of water depth. Such windows are usually associated with a water column in which a brightly coloured float resides for observation through the window. Such windows do not provide any visible indication of water temperature.

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Objects of the Invention

It is an object of the present invention to overcome or substantially ameliorate the above disadvantage and/or
5 more generally to provide an improved electric kettle having light emitting temperature-indication visible through water in the kettle at a kettle window.

Disclosure of the Invention

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There is disclosed herein an electric kettle, comprising:
a water-containing vessel having a floor and a window,

an electric heating element disposed with respect to
15 the vessel so as to transfer heat to water contained therein,

a temperature sensor for sensing water temperature within the vessel,

a light emitter extending through the floor of the
20 vessel to illuminate water in the vessel, and

circuitry associated with the temperature sensor and the light emitter to affect light emission characteristics thereof imparted to the water for viewing through the window.

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Preferably, the light emitter comprise an LED.

Preferably, the LED is located within a hood that passes

through the vessel floor in a sealed manner.

Preferably, the electric kettle comprises two or more said LEDs having different colour-emission characteristics,
5 each LED being controlled by the circuitry and shining into the vessel to illuminate water therein.

Preferably, the electric kettle further comprises a handle formed integrally with the kettle, and wherein the
10 circuitry is located on a PCB located within the handle.

Preferably, the temperature sensor comprises a steam tube extending from the vessel to a thermistor.

15 Preferably, electric kettle further comprises a base upon which the kettle sits and via which electricity passes from an external source of electricity to the heating element.

20 Brief Description of the Drawings

A preferred form of the present invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:

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Fig. 1 is a schematic plan illustration of internal components of an electric kettle,

Fig. 2 is a schematic cross-sectional elevation of the electric kettle of Fig. 1, and

Fig. 3 is a schematic circuit diagram of a PCB

5 incorporated into the electric kettle of Figs. 1 and 2.

Description of the Preferred Embodiment

In Figs. 1 and 2 of the accompanying drawings there is
10 depicted schematically an electric kettle the 10. The kettle 10 is made primarily of moulded plastics parts and sits upon a base 11 via which electricity is conveyed to the kettle in a known manner. The kettle includes a vessel 12 and a bottom housing 13 upon which the vessel
15 is attached. Within the bottom housing there is provided a heating element 14 positioned beneath a floor 15 of the vessel 12. The vessel includes a window 16 through which water within the vessel can be viewed from outside. A lid 17 covers the vessel 12. A pooring spout 18 is
20 provided at the top of the vessel 12 alongside the lid 17.

A handle 20 is formed integrally with the vessel 12. There is a power switch having an internal neon light
25 covered by a light-transmissive switch body 19 at the base of the handle.

At the top of the handle, there is a lid-release switch

21 to raise the lid 17. Depending from the lid 17 adjacent to the top portion of the handle 20 is a silicon rubber tube 22 via which steam is relayed from the vessel 12 to a thermistor or other temperature-sensing device.

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A printed circuit board 23 resides within the handle 20 and communicates with the thermistor. The printed circuit board receives power via the base 11 and the switch 19.

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Extending through the floor 15 is a light-transmissive hood 24 beneath which there is located a pair of LEDs 25.

The LEDs would be of different colour-emission and preferably capable of each emitting colour of different wavelength. Wires 26 extend between the PCB 23 and the LEDs 25. The hood 24 is tightly fitted and sealed to the floor 15 so that water within the vessel 12 cannot leak thereabout.

20 In use, one fills or partially fills the vessel 12 with cold water and depresses the switch 19. Power is then relayed to the heating element 14 and the PCB activates one or both of the LEDs so as to emit a certain light colour - typically blue light. The light passes through
25 the hood 24 into the water for viewing through the window 16.

As temperature of the water increases, steam passes

through the Tube 22 to the thermistor, which in turn provides a signal to the PCB, which (upon determining that a certain temperature has been reached in the water) activates one or both of the LEDs to emit a colour of different wavelength. For example, green light might be emitted. As temperature increases toward boiling point, a red light might be emitted to indicate a high water temperature. Of course, when boiling occurs, the thermistor will send a signal to the PCB to deactivate the heating element 14.

If the water is allowed to partially cool and the switch 19 is again depressed, instead of initially emitting a blue light, a light appropriate for the temperature of the water will be emitted.

It should be appreciated that modifications and alterations obvious to those skilled in the art are not to be considered as beyond the scope of the present invention. For example, the LEDs might - instead of being provided at the floor 15 - be provided at a wall of the vessel 12. Ideally, the LEDs would not be directly visible through the window 16, as it is intended that the LEDs illuminate the water and it is the colour of the water through the window that indicates temperature thereof.

CLAIMS:

1. An electric kettle, comprising:
 - a water-containing vessel having a floor and a
5 window,
an electric heating element disposed with respect to
the vessel so as to transfer heat to water contained
therein,
a temperature sensor for sensing water temperature
10 within the vessel,
a light emitter extending through the floor of the
vessel to illuminate water in the vessel, and
circuitry associated with the temperature sensor and
the light emitter to affect light emission characteristics
15 thereof imparted to the water for viewing through the
window.
2. The electric kettle of Claim 1, wherein the light
emitter comprise an LED.
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3. The electric kettle of Claim 2, wherein the LED is
located within a hood that passes through the vessel floor
in a sealed manner.
- 25 4. The electric kettle of Claim 1, comprising two or
more said light emitters having different colour-emission
characteristics, each light emitter being controlled by
the circuitry and shining into the vessel to illuminate

water therein.

5. The electric kettle of Claim 1, further comprising a handle formed integrally with the kettle, and wherein the
5 circuitry is located on a PCB within the handle.

6. The electric kettle of Claim 1, wherein the temperature sensor comprises a steam tube extending from the vessel to a thermistor.

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7. The electric kettle of Claim 1, further comprising a base upon which the kettle sits and via which electricity passes from an external source of electricity to the heating element.

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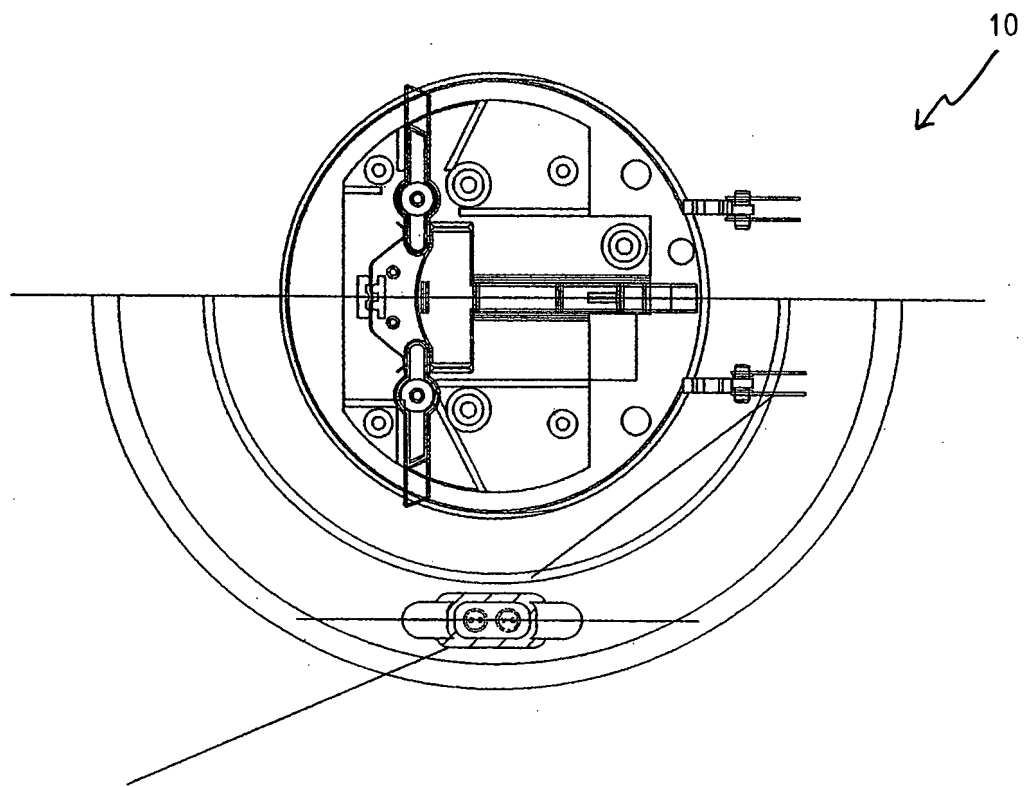


FIG. 1

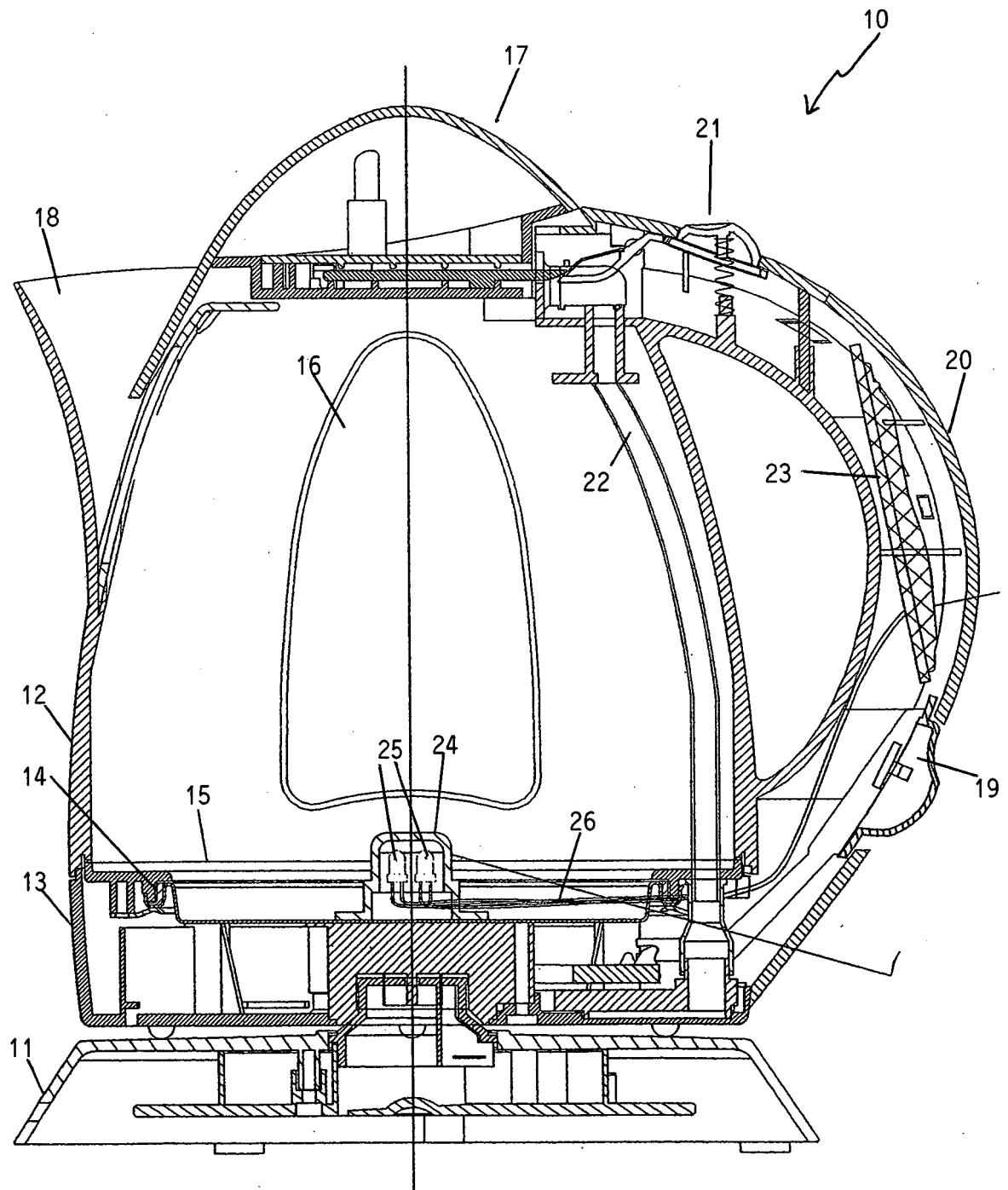


FIG. 2

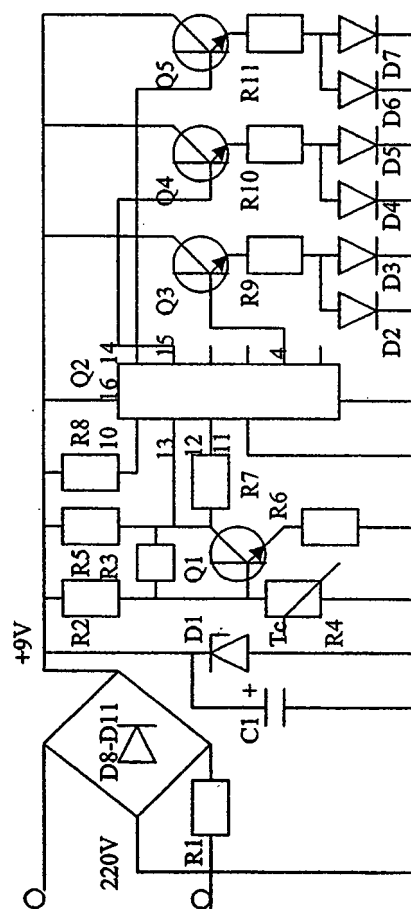


FIG. 3