

[54] **DISPOSABLE CONTAINER MEANS**
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 abandoned.

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 [58] **Field of Search**..... **294/1 R, 16, 19 R, 25,**
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 228/3.5

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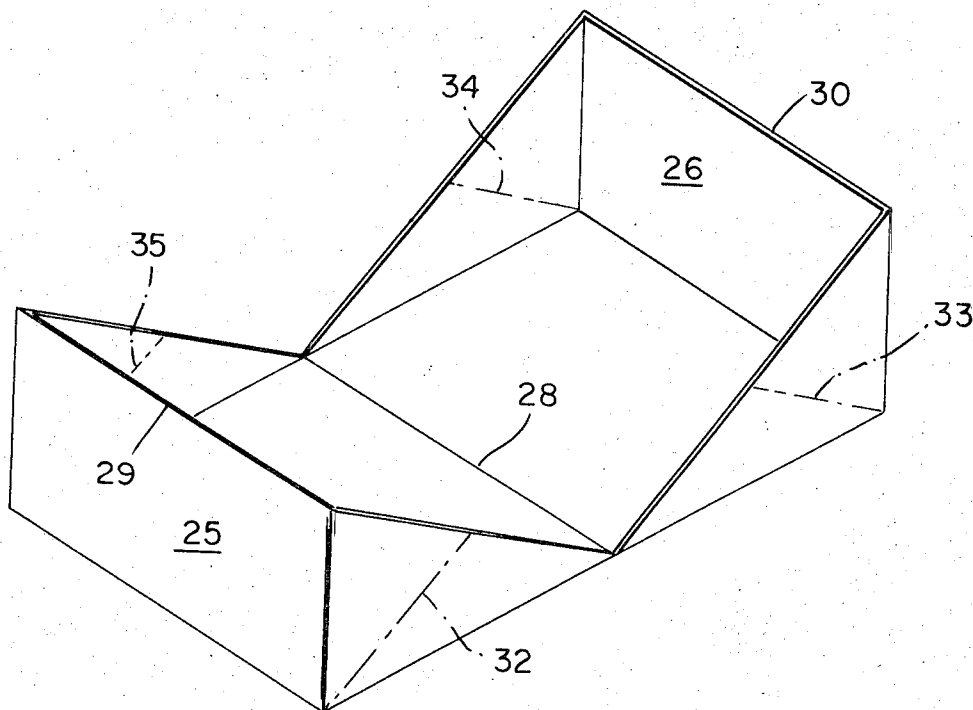
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[57]

ABSTRACT

Disposable container means which can be transported in a substantially compact state and which then can be readily erected for use are disclosed. Each container has an opening adapted to be placed down over an object which is to be picked up. The object to be picked up is forced into the container by movement of the bottom edges of the container. The container with the object to be picked up inside is then disposed of in an appropriate manner.

4 Claims, 2 Drawing Figures



DISPOSABLE CONTAINER MEANS**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION**

This is a division of Ser. No. 215,792, filed Jan. 7, 1972, now abandoned.

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to disposable container means and, more particularly, to a system and means adapted for use in picking up and disposing of various kinds of refuse.

2. Background of the Invention

One of the problems in keeping animals, particularly dogs, as pets in the city is the tendency of such animals to deposit feces on streets, sidewalks, neighboring lawns and in parks, etc. while the animals are being walked. Heretofore various means have been proposed for use in picking up and removing animal feces and other kinds of refuse. One such means has been a package combination such as that described in U.S. Pat. No. 3,286,826 which includes a deformable scoop used to shovel refuse into another container. This combination type package has the disadvantage of involving multiple noninterconnected parts. The scoop is often difficult to manipulate in combination with the container portion of the package combination and unless the scoop is fabricated from fairly thick material the scoop has to be held at a location fairly close to the exposed refuse in order for the container portion of the package combination to work properly. The close proximity of the exposed refuse to the individual picking up the refuse is often disagreeable, even when the package combination functions as intended. When the container portion of the package is fabricated from a material which has a greater rigidity than kraft paper, the overall package combination does tend to work better with respect to the pickup operation. In fact, unless both the scoop and the container portion of the package combination have sufficient stiffness to support the animal refuse the package combination will not work at all. However, as the container portion of the package combination becomes stiffer closure of the package combination becomes more difficult without touching a portion of the container opening which has been touched by the refuse. Another problem with such a package combination is that after the refuse has been picked up, the package still has to be closed or sealed in some way before the package can be properly disposed of. In order to close and seal the package additional means are required. For example, with the package combination described above involving a container and scoop a rubber band, string, wire, sensitive tape, or other means has to be employed in order to insure that the refuse inside the container does not inadvertently fall out of the container.

Various other devices have been suggested for picking up and disposing of substances which are unsafe, offensive or otherwise undesirable for handling. Such devices, however, have generally involved the use of tong, scoop or shovel like arrangements — all of which have been found in practice to either be relatively complicated, expensive, difficult to use or simply ineffective for the intended purpose. One of the problems is that implements for picking up animal feces, for example, may allow the animal feces to accumulate on certain portions of the implements such that periodic odorous cleaning is necessitated in order to maintain some-

what sanitary conditions. Even when the reusable portion of the tongs, scoops, or shovels is protected by a covering, as disclosed for example in U.S. Pat. No. 3,281,178, there is the problem of initially inserting and then removing the protective covering. There is also the problem of sealing the container used in conjunction with the reusable portion of the equipment. Finally, most of these systems have the drawback of requiring that the reusable equipment be constantly carried even after the refuse has been picked up.

A further problem which arises is that some container means for picking up waste material are designed either for solely indoor or solely outdoor usage. In the case of tongs, shovels and the like, these implements are typically designed for outdoor usage and are not adapted for use within a house by reason of the accumulation of waste material on the implement itself, the size or shape of the implement or the inability of the implement to trap waste material without pushing the waste material all over the floor of the house.

A need has accordingly existed for a simple, inexpensive and yet effective system and means for picking up and disposing of various forms of refuse, which means is suitable for use both indoors and outdoors, and which can be disposed of sanitarily.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to provide an improved system and container means for use in picking up and disposing of various kinds of refuse.

Another object of the present invention is to provide disposable container means which are normally collapsed but which can be readily erected for use.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide inexpensive, self-contained, and effective container means for picking up refuse and particularly for picking up dog feces.

A further object of the present invention is to provide container means suitable for use either indoors or outdoors for picking up refuse.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide container means adapted to be closed as soon as the refuse is inside the container.

A still further object of the present invention is to provide container means for picking up refuse which can be operated by one hand of an individual without exposure of the individual to the refuse which is being picked up.

In accordance with the present invention, disposable container means are disclosed which can be simply erected for use. Each container has an opening in its erected form which is placed down over the refuse to be picked up. By pushing on the container itself, the refuse is forced into the container as the container closes. The closed container and contents can then be disposed of in an appropriate manner.

In an embodiment of the invention, the disposable container means comprises two clam shell type portions which are moved in relation to each other such that the container is closed by movement of one portion toward the other.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

Other and further objects, advantages and features of the invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description thereof, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view illustrating the inside of an embodiment of the present invention with clam shell like closure means; and

FIG. 2 is an end view illustrating the embodiment of FIG. 1 in a position for picking up refuse.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The container means of the present invention can be conveniently carried and readily erected for use. Each container means has an opening in its erected form which is designed to be placed down over the refuse to be picked up. The containers of the invention are so designed that refuse is picked up by exerting pressure on the containers. Such pressure closes the containers and the refuse contained inside the containers can then be disposed of in any appropriate manner.

The embodiment illustrated by FIG. 1 has two triangular tent shaped members 25 and 26 joined along crease line 28. As seen in FIG. 2, the container means illustrated by FIGS. 1 and 2 can be operated by positioning a container over the refuse and exerting pressure to cause edges 29 and 30 to come together.

This pressure exerted by hand forces the refuse inside the container where it is held until pressure on the container members is released. Accordingly, the embodiment illustrated by FIG. 1 provides simple and effective container means for picking up refuse of all kinds without exposing individual using the container means to the refuse which is completely covered once it is inside the container. By making suitable crease lines 32 - 35, the embodiment of FIGS. 1 and 2 can be folded flat for ease in carrying.

It will be readily apparent that various modifications in the collapsible containers of the present invention can be made. For example, the size of the containers can be adapted readily to a variety of uses. Obviously, the size will somewhat depend on the substance to be picked up and disposed of.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that this invention is well adapted to obtain all of the ends and objects

hereinabove set forth, together with other advantages which are obvious and which are inherent to the system. Not only are the containers of this invention easy to operate but they are inexpensive enough to be disposed of readily. The disposable containers, can be carried in folded form until ready for use, have positive pick up action and can be used equally satisfactorily indoors and outdoors in all types of environments.

It will be understood that the disposable containers can be fabricated from any suitable substance which is economical to use, such as laminated paper, cardboard, metal, plastic, rubber and the like. Although the above description primarily relates to the use of the novel container means for picking up, containing and handling of dog feces, such container means can be utilized in connection with other objectionable or unwieldy substances, such as small dead animals, e.g., birds, mice, etc., split chemicals and fertilizers, and the like.

Obviously, many other modifications and variations of the invention as hereinbefore set forth can be made without departing from the spirit and scope hereof.

What is claimed is:

1. Disposable container means for inexpensively disposing of refuse and adapted to be transported in a substantially compact state, said container means comprising a unitary structure having two identical semirigid members hinged together and biased in an open position, each member consisting of four pieces joined together including two rectangular pieces joined together at a right angle and joined to two opposing end pieces having a triangular shaped configuration forming a right angle, the sides of each triangular shaped end piece being equal in length to the width of the respective rectangular piece to which the sides are joined; said semi-rigid members being hinged together along one edge of identical rectangular pieces in both members such that corresponding edges of each member can be pressed together to form an enclosed space for refuse.

2. Disposable container means as in claim 1 in which the end pieces are creased to permit the semi-rigid members to be folded substantially flat.

3. Disposable container means as in claim 1 in which the unitary structure is made of cardboard.

4. Disposable container means as in claim 1 in which the unitary structure is made of plastic.

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