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Prinz et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2012/0124925 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: May 24, 2012**(54) **INTERLOCKING RUBBER TILES FOR
PLAYGROUNDS****Publication Classification**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A tile for covering an area which interlocks with an adjacent tile includes a main body having a top surface and a bottom surface disposed opposite the top surface. The main body has at least a first lateral side and a second lateral side. The tile includes a plurality of spaced apart male connectors situated on the first lateral side, and a plurality of spaced apart female receptacles situated on the second lateral side. The tile further includes a plurality of spaced apart slots and a plurality of spaced apart projections. Each slot is situated on either the first lateral side or the second lateral side of the main body inbetween either adjacent male connectors or adjacent female receptacles. Similarly, each projection is situated either on the first lateral side or the second lateral side of the main body inbetween either adjacent female receptacles or adjacent male connectors. The male connectors of the tile are engageable with female receptacles of an adjacent tile so that the tile may interlock with the adjacent tile. Also, the projections of the tile are receivable by slots of the adjacent tile to help prevent the tiles from curling or separating.

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- (63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 12/799,784, filed on Apr. 30, 2010, now Pat. No. 8,070,382.
- (60) Provisional application No. 61/215,087, filed on May 1, 2009, provisional application No. 61/279,975, filed on Oct. 28, 2009.

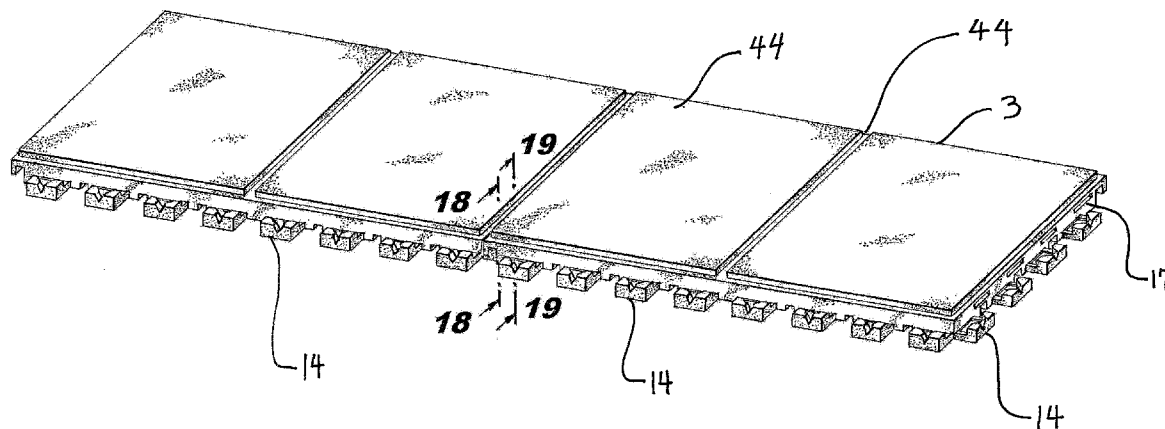


Fig. 1

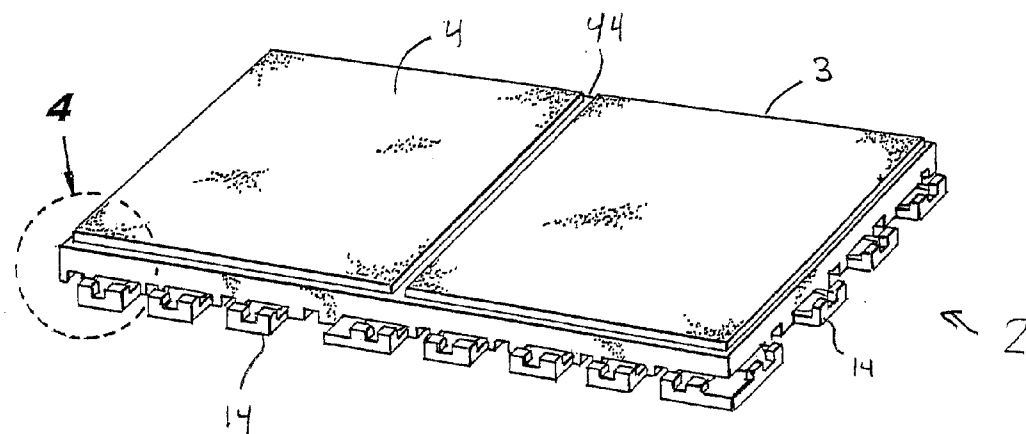
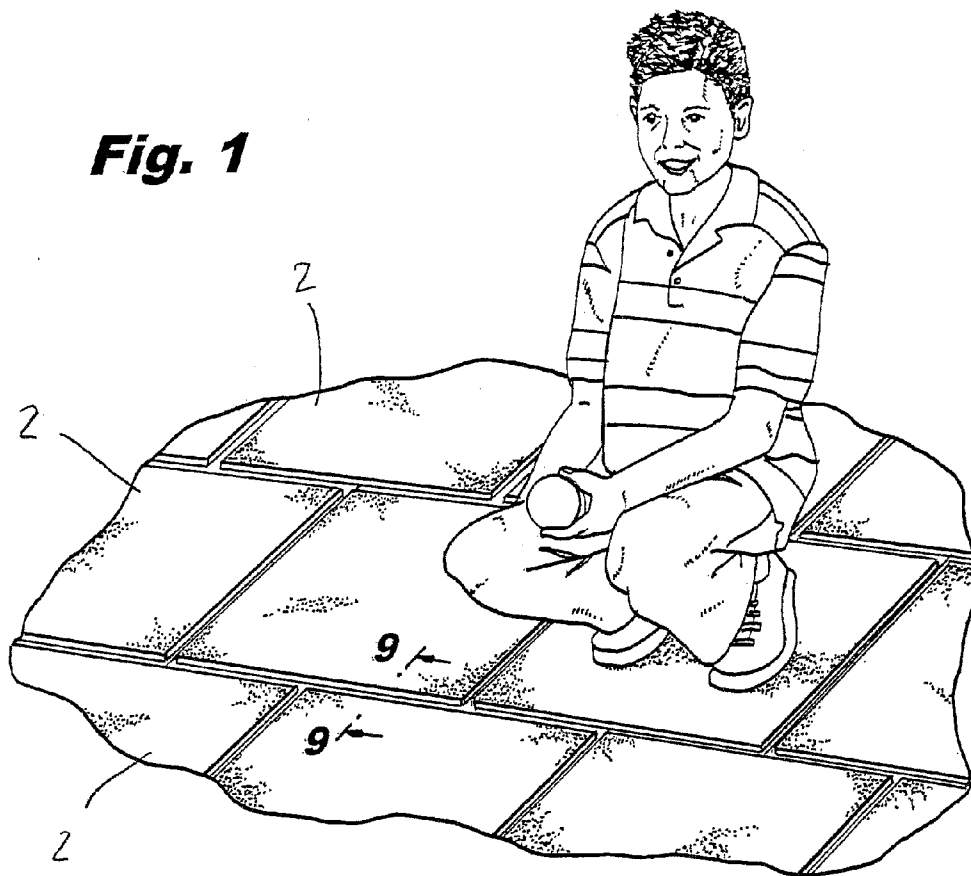


Fig. 2

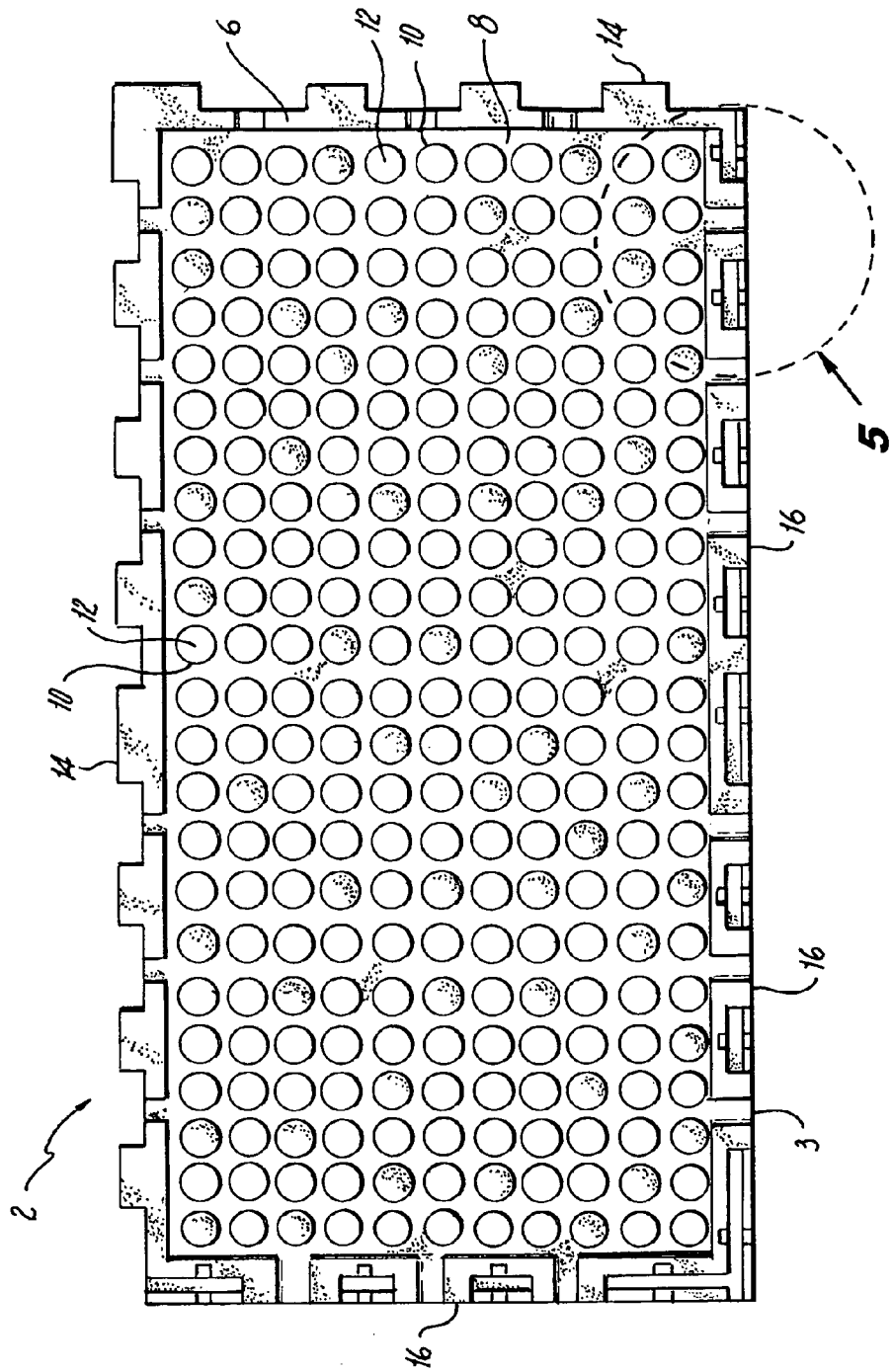
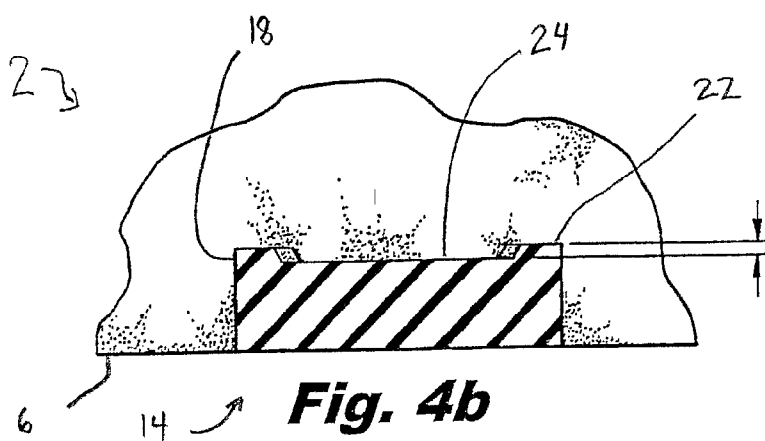
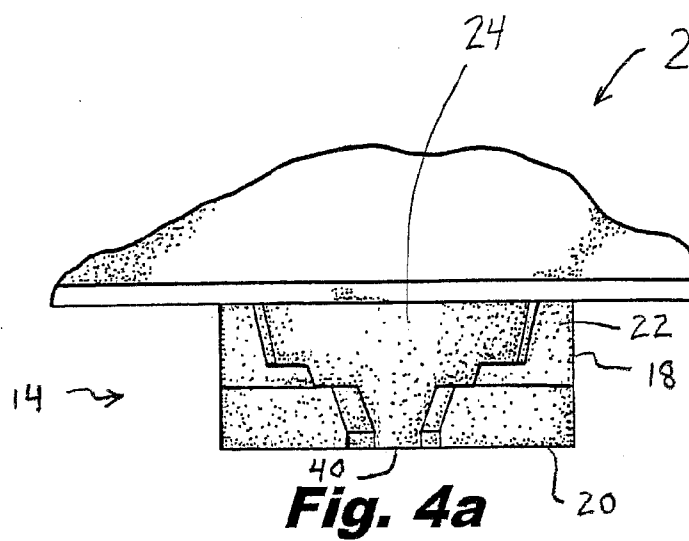
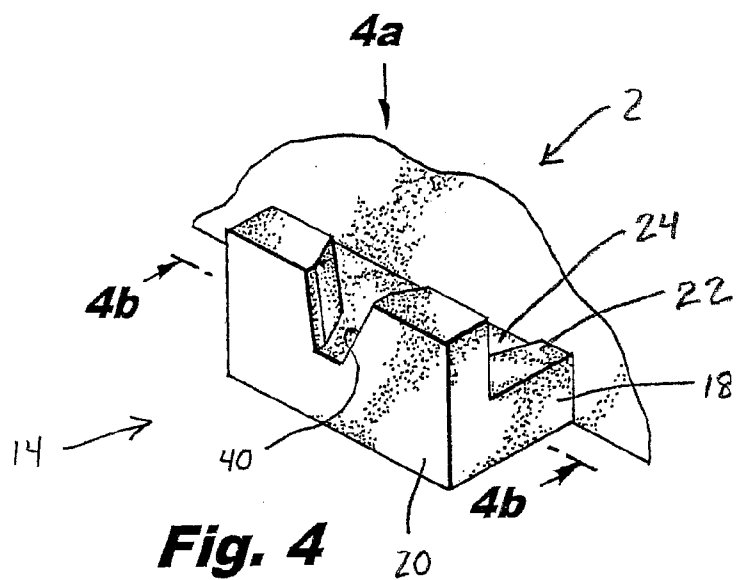
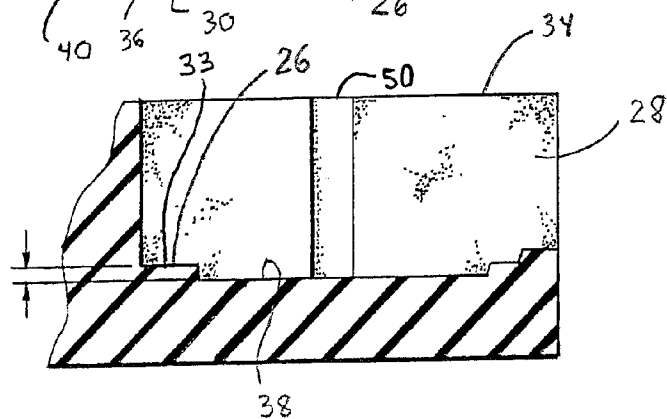
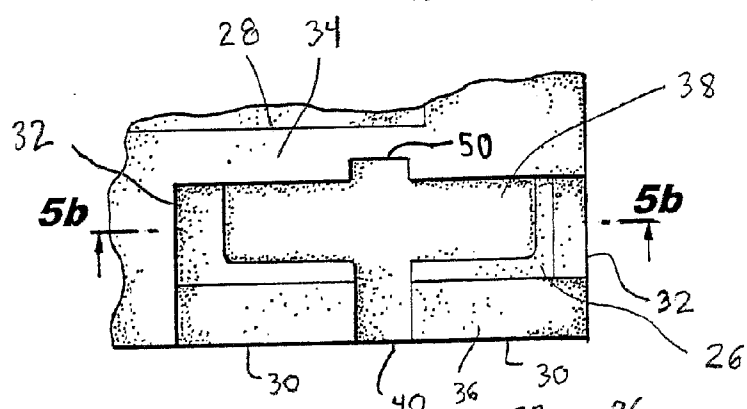
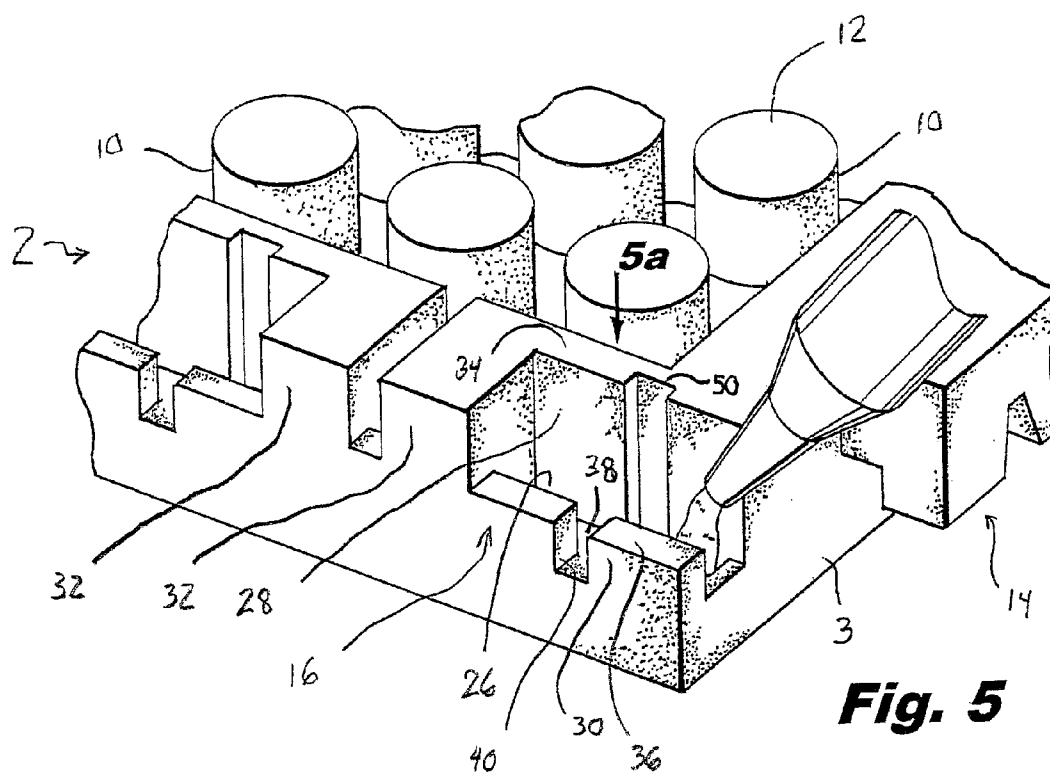


Fig. 3





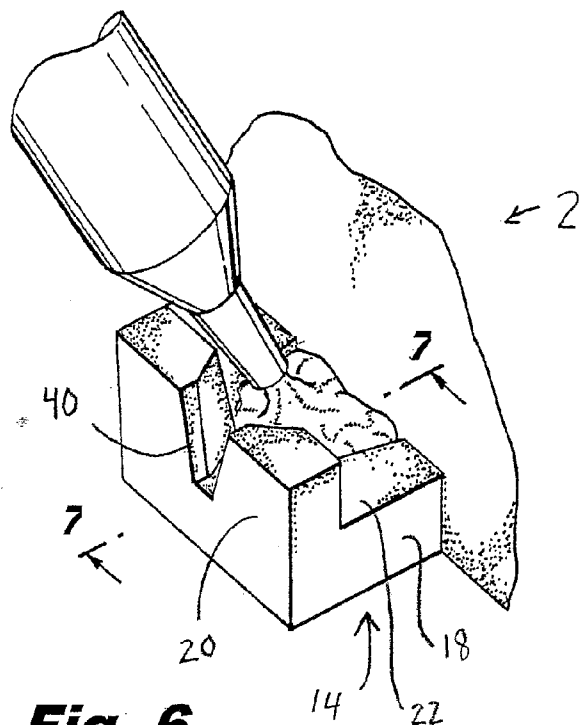


Fig. 6

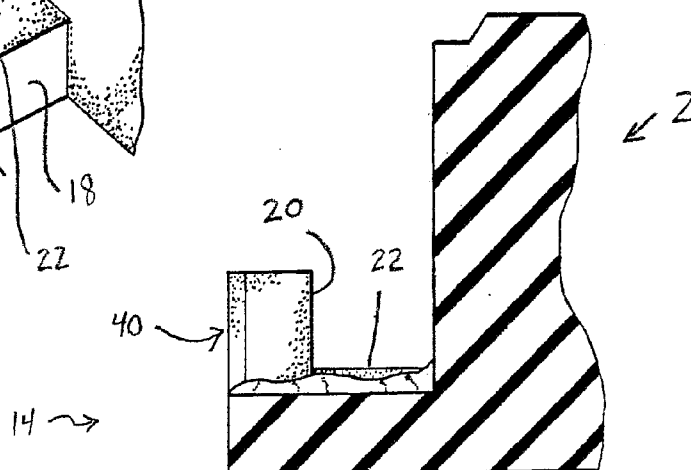
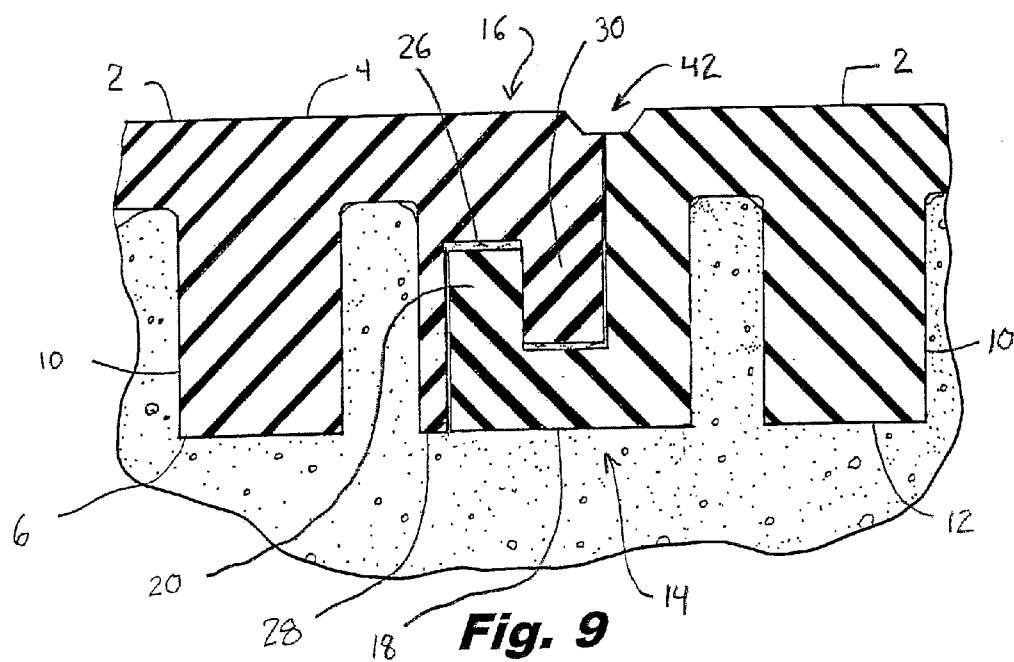
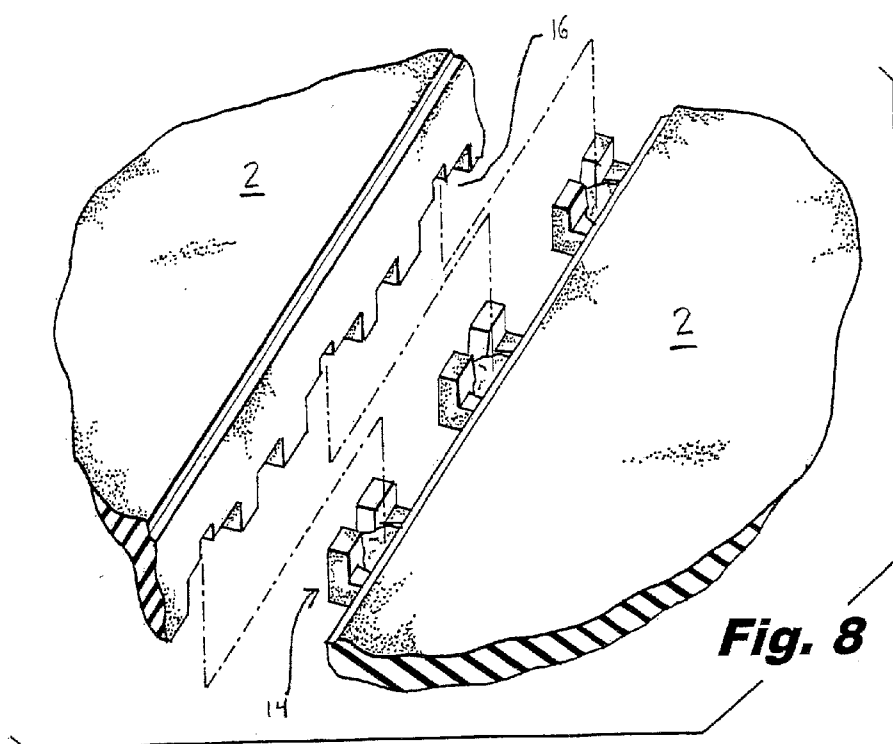


Fig. 7



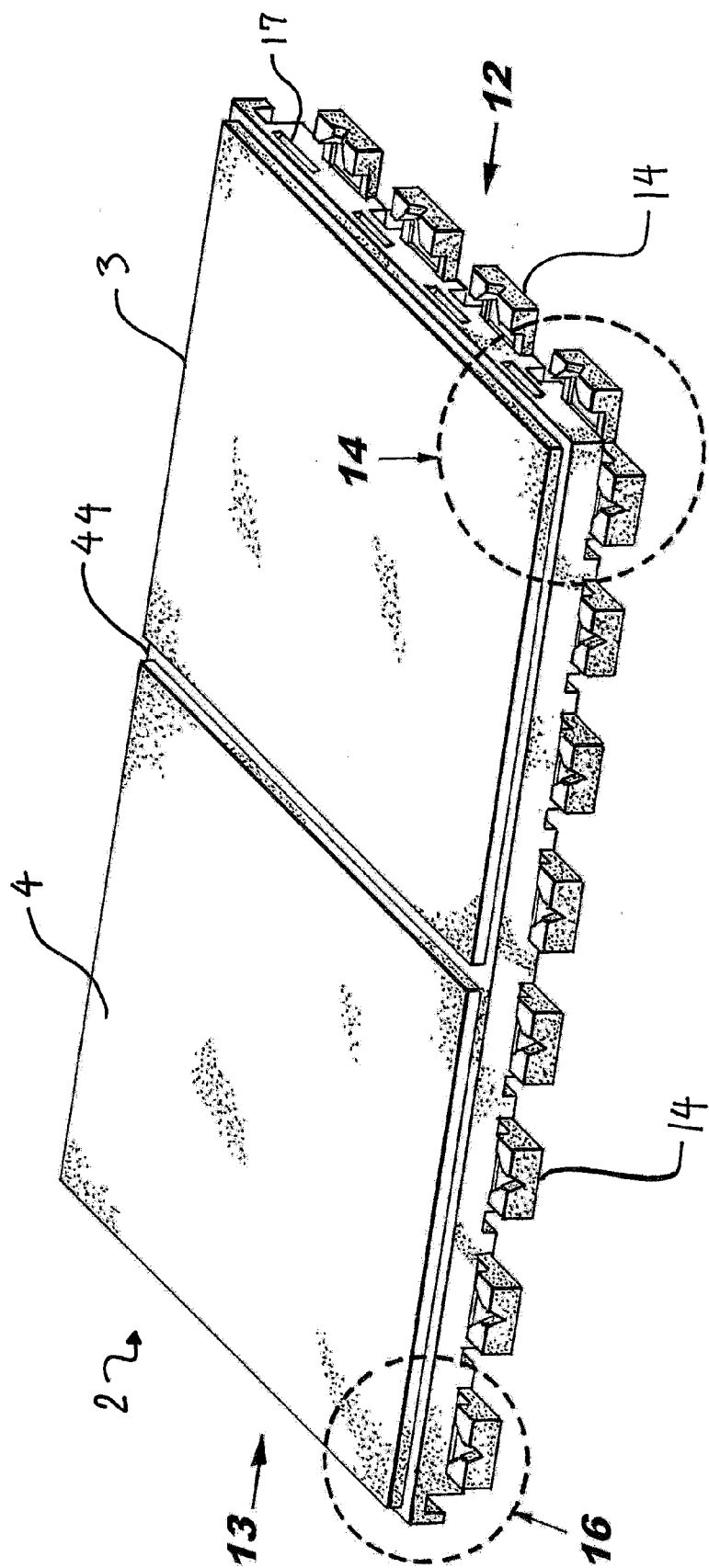


Fig. 10

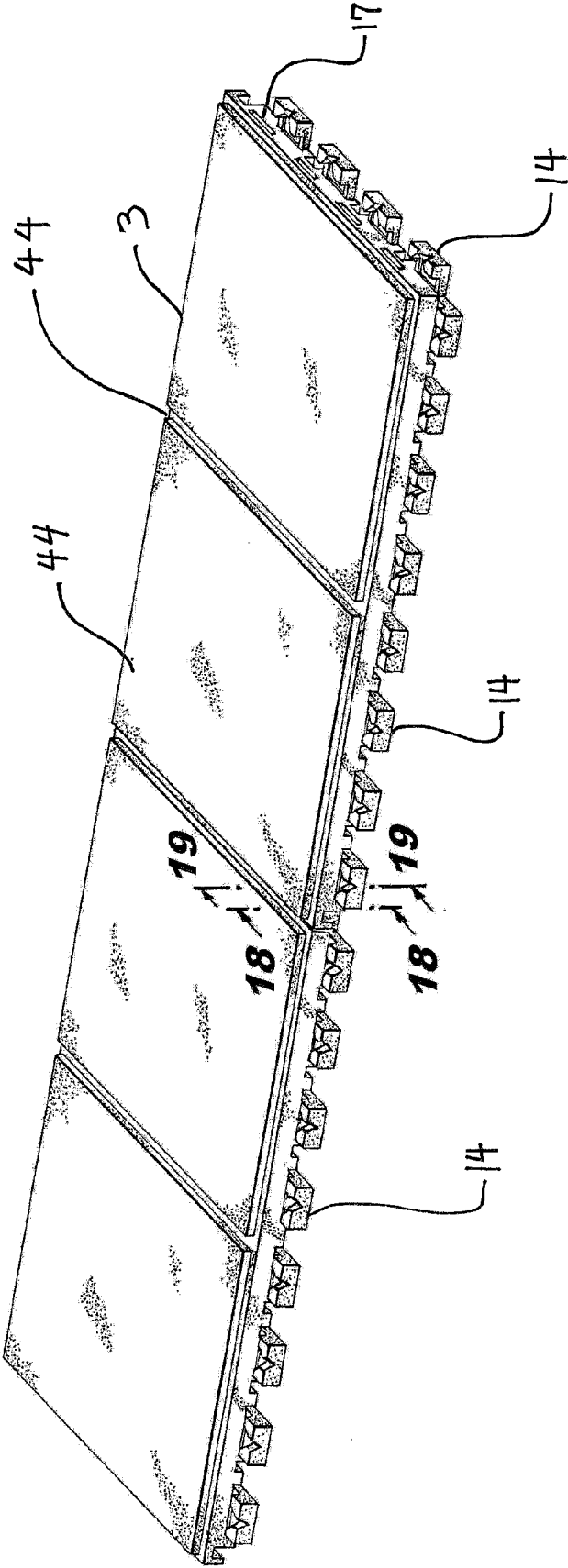


Fig. 11

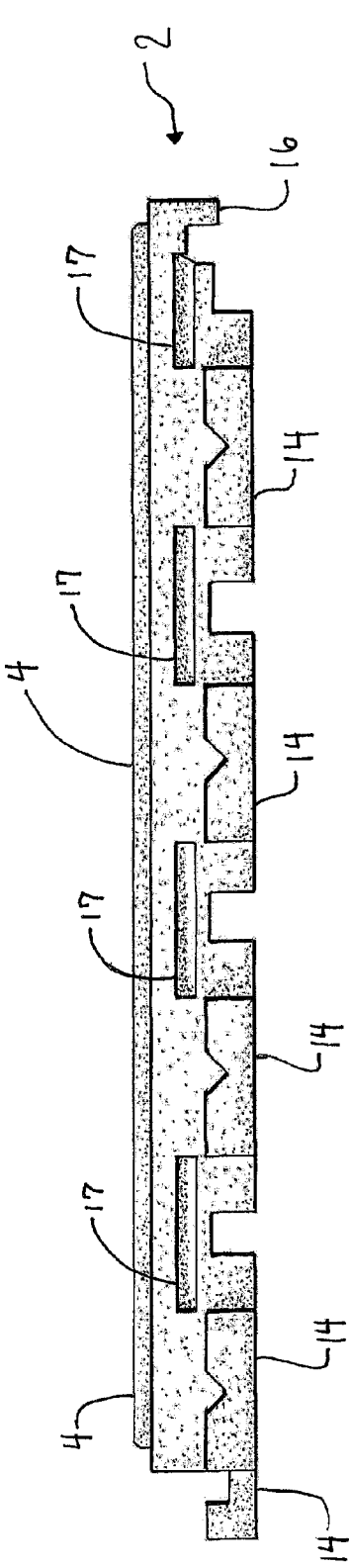


Fig. 12

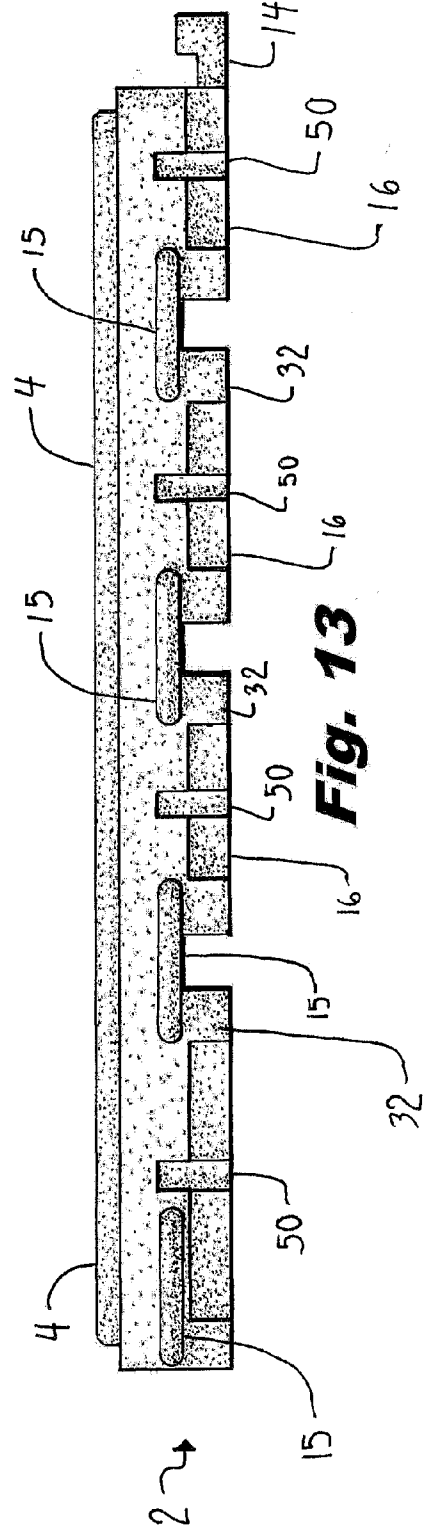
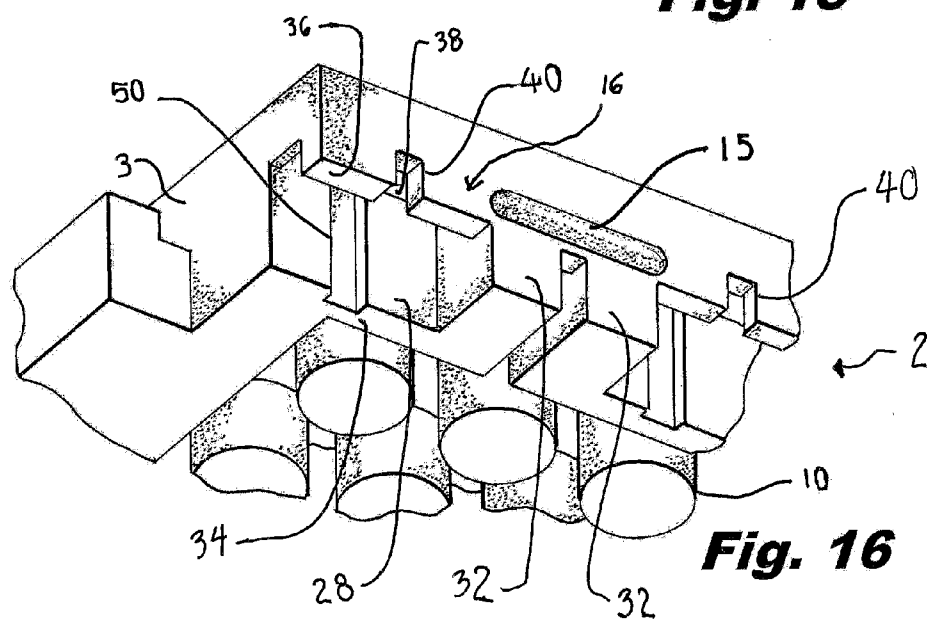
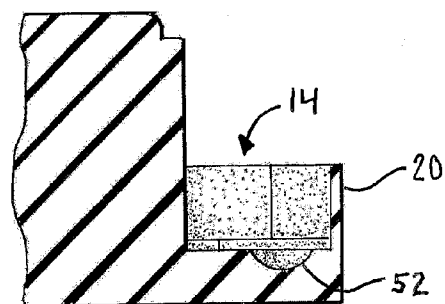
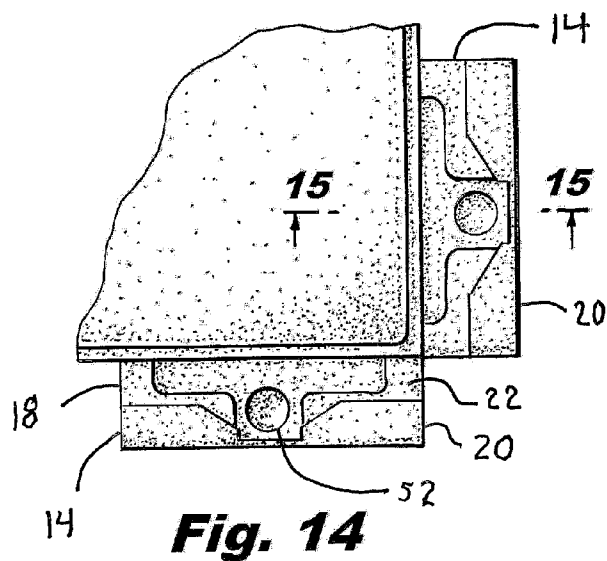
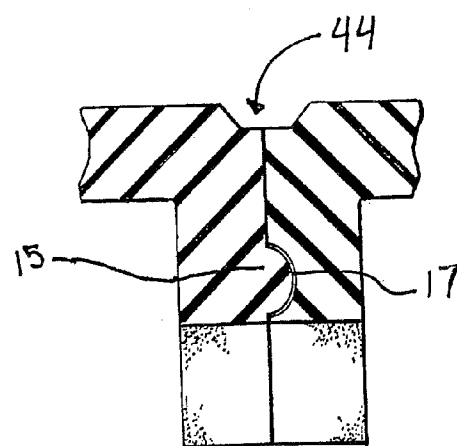
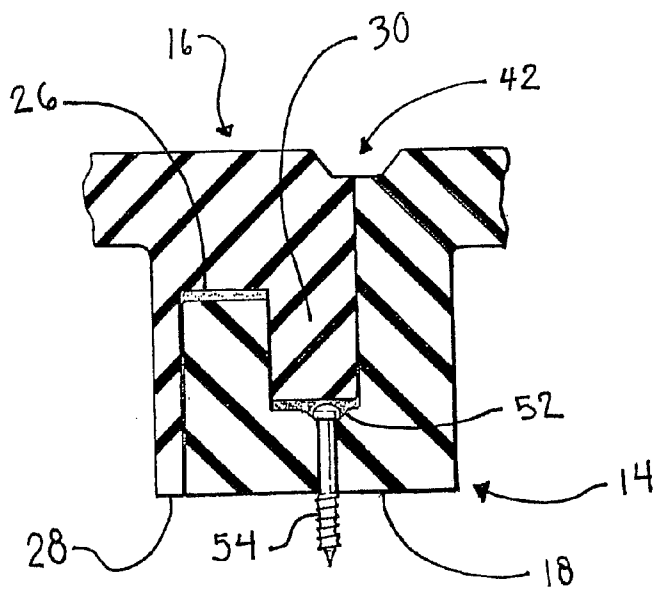
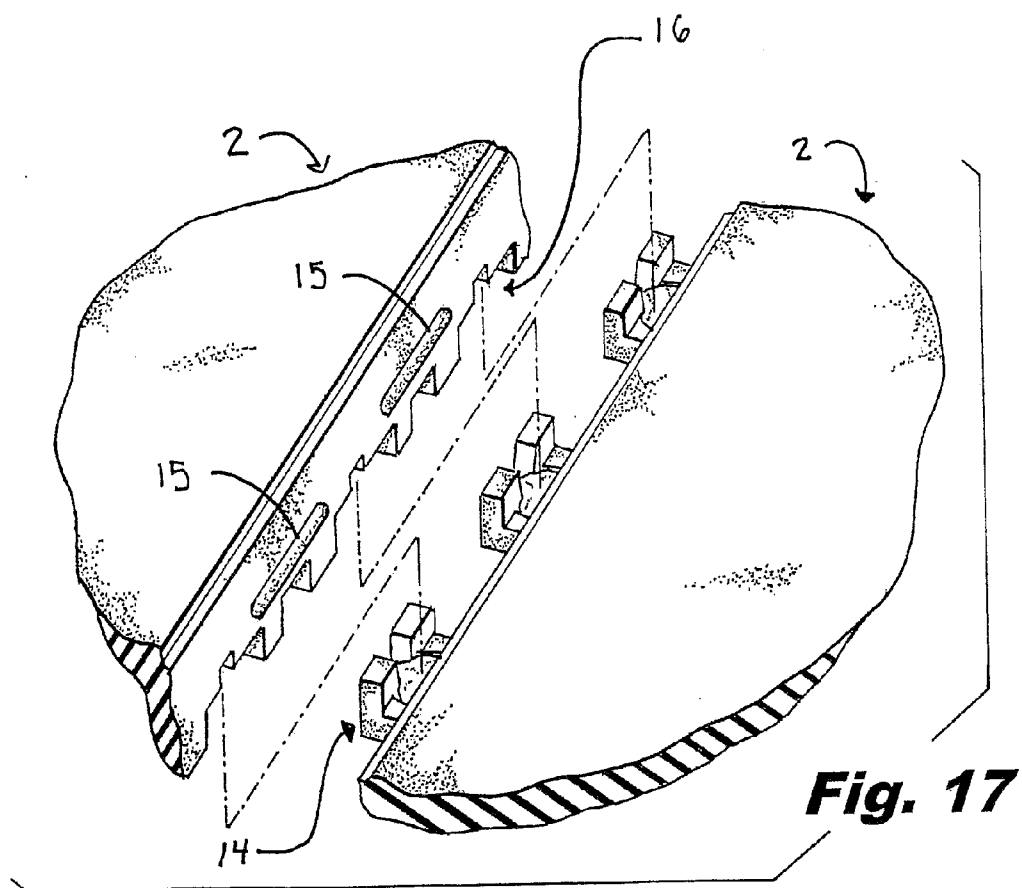


Fig. 13





INTERLOCKING RUBBER TILES FOR PLAYGROUNDS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. application Ser. No. 12/799,784, filed on Apr. 30, 2010, and entitled “Interlocking Rubber Tiles for Playgrounds”, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference and on which priority is hereby claimed, which prior application is based on U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 61/215,087, which was filed on May 1, 2009, and is entitled “Interlocking Rubber Tiles For Playgrounds”, and U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 61/279,975, which was filed on Oct. 28, 2009, and is entitled “Interlocking Rubber Tiles For Playgrounds”, the disclosure of each of which is hereby incorporated by reference and on which priority is hereby claimed.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] This invention generally relates protective padding and more particularly relates to recycled protective tiling.

[0004] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0005] The most common injuries at recreational facilities such as playgrounds and athletic or sporting arenas are attributed to falls. Such injuries include head trauma, fractures and sprains, some leaving long term disability. Children very often run on concrete slabs or loose gravel, while others play on swings, carrying them high above the ground. During incidents in which the child loses control or balance, the ground material can prove to be very unforgiving.

[0006] Conventional methods of minimizing injury from falls include padding the ground with dense material such as closed cell foam. This type of padding commonly comes in lengthy sheets that are cut to size. The sheets are placed over the ground, regardless of the composition. For example, closed cell foam pads are often placed over loose gravel in the same manner that they are placed over concrete slab. Unfortunately, the underlying ground material can affect the overall effectiveness of the protective padding.

[0007] Closed cell foam pads most typically have a planar bottom and top without any recesses. While this conventional design provides means for effectively positioning and maintaining coverage of a concrete slab, if the same foam pad is placed on loose gravel or rocks, it will not be secured and may cause further personal injury from movement of the protective covering. Additionally, when closed cell foam pads are placed on uneven surfaces such as gravel, the foam pads take the shape of the underlying surface, creating an uneven activity area that may provoke falls from tripping. Conventional closed cell foam padding also tends to become slippery when wet from inclement weather or nearby sprinklers as water commonly pools on the flat surface thereof.

[0008] There are also conventional tiles available that are made from reprocessed or recycled rubber, for example, from shredded rubber automobile tires. However, such conventional tiles do not interlock with one another and may separate, or buckle, leaving either an exposed area of the supporting surface on which the tiles are laid, or an uneven surface, which may cause injury to a child playing on the tiled surface. Also, if conventional non-interlocking tiles are installed on a

rooftop, they may be unsafe and may cause injury because of the potential flight characteristics of such tiles resulting from high wind conditions.

[0009] When conventional tiles are placed next to each other, even if they were somehow glued together, there may be a tendency for the tiles to curl at their edges, possibly caused by temperature fluctuations or use. Such curling may result in an uneven surface and may cause injury to a person walking or running thereon.

[0010] The present invention provides a novel rubberized padding device that overcomes the inherent disadvantages found in the conventional designs.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] It is an object of the present invention to provide rubberized tiles (which also include rubberized mats, blocks and pavers) for use in covering sports and recreational areas, playgrounds or the like, as well as rooftops, which interlock with one another.

[0012] It is another object of the present invention to provide rubberized, interlocking tiles which include structure that acts as a reservoir for containing glue to adhesively join adjacent tiles together.

[0013] It is still another object of the present invention to provide rubberized tiles which interlock with one another, and which include structure that acts as a reservoir for containing glue to adhesively join adjacent tiles together, and further include structure that allows excess glue to be removed from the reservoir.

[0014] It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide interlocking tiles that include structure which helps minimize separation, curling and peeling of the edges of the tiles.

[0015] It is yet another object of the present invention to provide interlocking tiles for use with playgrounds, rooftop surfaces and the like made from reprocessed or recycled rubber which overcome the inherent disadvantages of known tiles.

[0016] It is still another object of the present invention to provide interlocking tiles which may be installed on rooftops and which satisfy wind uplift criteria.

[0017] In accordance with one form of the present invention, a tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile includes a main body having a top surface and a bottom surface disposed opposite the top surface. The main body has at least a first lateral side and a second lateral side.

[0018] The tile includes at least one male connector situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body and extending outwardly therefrom. The tile further includes at least one female receptacle situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body.

[0019] The male connector of the tile is engageable with a female receptacle of an adjacent tile so that the tile may interlock with the adjacent tile.

[0020] Preferably, the male connector and the female receptacle include structure defining a reservoir for containing an adhesive for adhesively securing the tile and an adjacent tile together.

[0021] In another embodiment, the tile further includes structure defining at least one slot (that is, an elongated recess or opening) situated on at least one of the first and second lateral sides of the main body. The tile also includes at least

one corresponding projection situated on a opposite lateral side of the tile from where the at least one slot is located. The projection of the tile is received by a corresponding slot of an adjacent tile. When adjacent tiles are mated together, the engagement of the projection with the slot helps strengthen the connection between the tiles and minimizes the lateral sides of the adjacent tiles from curling upwardly or separating.

[0022] These and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will be apparent from the following detailed description of illustrative embodiments thereof, which is to be read in connection with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0023] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the interlocking tiles of the present invention joined together to form a protective surface for playgrounds and the like.

[0024] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the tile formed in accordance with the present invention.

[0025] FIG. 3 is a bottom plan view of a tile formed in accordance with the present invention.

[0026] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a portion of the tile of the present invention shown encircled in FIG. 2, and illustrating a male connector of the tile used for interlocking adjacent tiles together.

[0027] FIG. 4a is a top plan view of a portion of the tile of the present invention, and illustrating the male connector shown in FIG. 4.

[0028] FIG. 4b is a cross-sectional view of a portion of the tile formed in accordance with the present invention and, in particular, the male connector thereof, taken along line 4b-4b of FIG. 4.

[0029] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a portion of the underside of the tile formed in accordance with the present invention shown encircled in FIG. 3, and illustrating a female receptacle of the tile used for interlocking adjacent tiles together.

[0030] FIG. 5a is a top plan view of a portion of the tile of the present invention, and illustrating the female receptacle shown in FIG. 5.

[0031] FIG. 5b is a cross-sectional view of a portion of the tile of the present invention, and illustrating the female receptacle of the tile, taken along line 5b-5b of FIG. 5a.

[0032] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a portion of the tile of the present invention, and illustrating a liquid adhesive being applied to a male connector thereof.

[0033] FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of a portion of the tile of the present invention and, in particular, the male connector of the tile, taken along line 7-7 of FIG. 6.

[0034] FIG. 8 is an exploded perspective view of portions of two adjacent tiles of the present invention, and illustrating the joining of the two tiles together.

[0035] FIG. 9 is a cross-sectional view of portions of two joined together tiles of the present invention.

[0036] FIG. 10 is a perspective view of the tile formed in accordance with a second embodiment of the present invention.

[0037] FIG. 11 is a perspective view of two tiles formed in accordance with the second embodiment of the present invention joined together.

[0038] FIG. 12 is a right elevational view of the second embodiment of the tile of the present invention shown in FIG. 10, showing the tile with side slots.

[0039] FIG. 13 is a left elevational view of the second embodiment of the tile of the present invention shown in FIG. 10, showing the tile with side projections.

[0040] FIG. 14 is a top plan view of a corner portion of the second embodiment of the tile of the present invention shown encircled in FIG. 10 by the broken line circle indicated by arrowed line 14.

[0041] FIG. 15 is a cross-sectional view of the male connector of the second embodiment of the tile of the present invention shown in FIG. 10, taken along line 15-15 of FIG. 14.

[0042] FIG. 16 is a perspective view of a portion of the underside of the tile formed in accordance with the second embodiment of the present invention shown encircled in FIG. 10 by the broken line circle indicated by arrowed line 16, and illustrating an excess glue channel communicating with a female receptacle of the tile.

[0043] FIG. 17 is an exploded perspective view of portions of two adjacent tiles formed in accordance with the second embodiment of the present invention, and illustrating the joining of the two tiles together.

[0044] FIG. 18 is a cross-sectional view of portions of two joined together tiles formed in accordance with the second embodiment of the present invention, taken along line 18-18 of FIG. 11.

[0045] FIG. 19 is another cross-sectional view of portions of two joined together tiles formed in accordance with the second embodiment of the present invention, taken along line 19-19 of FIG. 11.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0046] Referring to FIGS. 1-9 of the drawings, it will be seen that a rubber tile protective system constructed in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention includes a plurality of rubber tiles 2, each rubber tile 2 being interconnectable to another by a series of interlocking mechanisms integrated along the peripheral edges of each tile. The rubber tiles 2 may be selectively coupled by the interlocking mechanisms to one another to form a customizable protective surface of various proportion and size, depending on the specific application and area to be protected.

[0047] Each tile 2 may be formed in a plurality of shapes and sizes, but preferably is rectangular. The tile 2 includes a main body 3 residing generally in a plane and having a top surface 4 having a high coefficient of friction for providing sufficient traction to children and other users. The main body 3 of the tile 2 also includes an oppositely disposed bottom surface 6, the bottom surface 6 being laid on and resting on the ground or other supporting surface and having a recessed portion 8 formed therein. A plurality of cylindrical stanchions 10 extending downwardly and outwardly from the recessed portion 8, the end face 12 of each stanchion 10 being coplanar with the bottom surface 6 of the tile 2, provide gripping means to resist movement of the tile 2 when the ground surface consists of loose materials such as gravel, pebbles or shale. More specifically, when the tiles 2 are placed on a ground surface consisting of loose materials, the loose ground material may fill the recessed area around the stanchions 10 and the stanchions 10 may anchor the tile 2 in place. Each end face 12 of the stanchions 10 defines a flat bottom surface that is coplanarly aligned with the bottom surface 6 of the tile 2 to provide a large surface area to grip flat ground materials such as concrete slab.

[0048] Along the periphery of the main body 3 of the rubber tiles 2 are situated a plurality of interlocking mechanisms comprising a male connector 14 and a mating female receptacle 16. More specifically, along a first lateral side and neighboring second lateral side of the main body 3 of the tile 2 are extending outwardly therefrom a series of male connectors 14. Disposed oppositely of the male connectors 14, along a third lateral side and neighboring fourth lateral side of the main body 3, are extending outwardly therefrom a series of female receptacles 16. Individual rubber tiles 2 may be joined together by cooperatively mating the male connectors 14 on the first and second lateral side of a first tile 2 with the female receptacles 16 on the third or fourth lateral side of a second tile. To provide structural support, the tiles 2 are preferably joined together in a staggered manner, as shown in FIG. 1.

[0049] Now referring to FIGS. 3, 4, 4a, 6 and 7 of the drawings, it can be seen that each male connector 14 is formed as an L-shaped member extending perpendicularly outwardly from the side of the tile 2. The male connector 14 includes a horizontally disposed first segment 18, which extends coplanarly with the main body 3, and a vertically disposed second segment 20, the second segment 20 extending perpendicularly from the first segment 18. The first segment 18 further includes a top surface 22 having a glue reservoir 24 formed as a recess therein for receiving liquid adhesive. A plurality of male connectors 14 are preferably formed in series along the first and second sides of the tile 2, the connectors 14 preferably being equidistant from one another.

[0050] The female receptacles 16, as illustrated in FIGS. 3, 5, 5a and 5b of the drawings, are formed as rectangular recesses 26 within the bottom surface 6 of the tile 2, along the third and fourth sides thereof. The recesses 26 are defined by an inner wall 28, an oppositely disposed outer wall 30, two side walls 32 and a recessed surface 33. The inner wall 28 is connected to the oppositely disposed outer wall 30 by the two side walls 32, the inner wall 28 extending from the recessed portion 8 of the bottom surface 6 and terminating in an end wall 34 that is coplanar to the bottom surface 6, and the outer wall 30 extending from the recessed surface 33 of the female receptacle 16 and terminating in an end wall 36, the outer wall 30 being shorter than the inner wall 28 to accommodate and engage the horizontal first segment 18 and top surface 22 thereof of an aligned male connector 14 of an adjacent tile 2. The female receptacles 16 are preferably formed in series along the third and fourth sides of the tile 2, each female receptacle 16 preferably being positioned opposite from its corresponding male connector 14 on the first and second sides. The recesses 26 cooperatively receive the vertical second segment 20 of the male connector 14, mating the male connector 14 and the female receptacle 16 and interlocking neighboring tiles 2. The recessed surface 33 (within the recess 26) of each female receptacle 16 also has formed therein a glue reservoir 38 as a recess for receiving liquid adhesive, the glue reservoir 38 being similar in shape to the glue reservoir 24 formed in the male connector 14.

[0051] Each of the outer wall 30 of the female receptacle 16 and the vertical second segment 20 of the male connector 14 further includes a vertically disposed slot 40, which slots 40 are aligned with one another when the connector 14 is received by the receptacle 16. The vertical slot 40 of the vertical second segment 20 of the male connector 14 is in fluid communication with the glue reservoir 24 formed in the male connector 14 to allow excess adhesive filling the reservoir to flow through the vertical slot 40 from the male connector 14.

Similarly, the vertical slot 40 of the outer wall 30 of the female receptacle 16 is in fluid communication with the glue reservoir 38 formed in the female receptacle 16 to allow excess adhesive filling the reservoir 38 to flow through the vertical slot 40 from the female receptacle 16.

[0052] Each inner wall 28 of the female receptacles 16 further includes a vertically disposed channel 50 formed therein, as shown in FIGS. 5, 5a, 5b and 16. The vertical channel 50 of each inner wall 28 extends from the glue reservoir 38 of the female receptacle 16 through the end wall 34 thereof. Each vertical channel 50 of each inner wall 28 is in communication with the glue reservoir 38 and recess 26 formed in the female receptacle 16 to allow excess adhesive filling the reservoir 38 to flow through the vertical channel 50 from the female receptacle 16, especially when two tiles are joined together and placed right-side up. In a preferred embodiment, the vertical channel 50 of the inner wall 28 is oppositely situated to the vertical slot 40 of the outer wall 30 of each female receptacle 16.

[0053] Prior to interlocking two neighboring tiles 2, a liquid adhesive is applied to one or both of the horizontal first segment 18 and/or glue reservoir 24 of each male connector 14 and the recess 26 and/or glue reservoir 38 of each female receptacle 16. As the aligned male connector 14 and female receptacle 16 of adjacent tiles 2 are mated and pressure is applied, the aligned vertical slots 40 in the outer wall 30 of the female receptacle 16 and the vertical second segment 20 of the male connector 14 create a path for excess adhesive to exit the glue reservoirs 24, 38 of the male connectors 14 and female receptacles 16 and the sides of the joined together tiles 2. Excess glue will also escape the female receptacle 16 through the channel 50 formed in the inner wall 28 of the female receptacle 16 and will flow downwardly towards the ground and away from the top surface of the tile when the tiles are joined together and positioned with the top surface properly facing upwardly. Thus, the channels 40, 50 will help minimize or prevent any adhesive from adhering to the top surface of the tile, which would otherwise have required its removal therefrom, which is difficult to do because of the rough surface texture of the tile. The adhesive secures the vertical second segment 20 of the male connector 14 within the recess 26 of the female receptacle 16 and preferably secures the top surface 22 of the horizontal first segment 18 of the male connector 14 to the end wall 36 of the outer wall 30 of the female receptacle 16.

[0054] The top surface 4 of each tile 2 preferably further includes a plurality of water channels 42. The water channels 42 are preferably formed as chamfers along the top peripheral edges of the tile 2. As neighboring tiles 2 are interlocked, their facing peripheral chamfered edges create such a recess or channel 42 that allows water to run off the top surface 4 of the tile 2 into the channel 42, minimizing water pooling. Additional water channels 44 may be formed as elongated recesses in the top surface 4, each being in fluid communication with an aforementioned peripheral water channel 42.

[0055] FIGS. 10-19 illustrate a second embodiment of the rubber tile protective system of the present invention. As in the embodiment described previously and shown in FIGS. 1-9, the protective system formed in accordance with this second embodiment also preferably includes a plurality of interconnectable rubber tiles 2, each tile 2 having a main body 3, a top surface 4, a bottom surface 6, a plurality of cylindrical stanchions 10, and a plurality of interlocking mechanisms comprising a male connector 14 and a mating female recep-

tacle 16, and other components described previously with respect to the first embodiment, with like reference numbers used herein designating the same or similar structures.

[0056] However, in this second embodiment, the tile 2 includes one or more slots 17 (that is, elongated recesses or openings) formed in at least one lateral side thereof, and one or more elongated projections 15 formed on at least another lateral side of the tile 2 which is preferably situated opposite the side having the slot or slots 17 formed therein. In a preferred form, the tile 2 includes a plurality of slots 17 spaced apart from each other, each slot being positioned on a side of the tile between adjacent male connectors 14, as shown in FIG. 12 of the drawings. Alternatively, one or more elongated projections 15 may be situated on this side between the male connectors 14 instead of the slots 17.

[0057] Correspondingly, in this preferred form, the tile 2 includes a plurality of elongated projections 15 spaced apart from each other, each projection being positioned on a side of the tile that is preferably opposite the side having the slots 17, as shown in FIG. 13 of the drawings. Each projection 15 is preferably situated on the side between adjacent female receptacles 16. Alternatively, one or more slots 17 may be situated on this side between the female receptacles 16 instead of the projections 15.

[0058] When two tiles 2 are placed adjacent one another, with the side of one tile which includes projections 15 facing the side of the other tile which includes slots 17, the projections 15 and slots 17 should be positioned on their respective sides so that they are in alignment and may mate with one another, the projections 15 of one tile being received by corresponding slots 17 of the other tile. Adhesive may be applied to either or both of the projections 15 and slots 17 further to secure the tiles together.

[0059] If the tile 2 is rectangular in shape, in that it includes two opposite shorter sides and two opposite longer sides, such as shown in FIG. 10, then it is preferred to have the two shorter sides formed with the projections 15 on one shorter side and the slots 17 on the other shorter side. It is the shorter sides of the tile that tend to curl, rather than the longer sides, and thus the projections 15 and slots 17 are most needed on the shorter sides of the tile. However, it is envisioned to be within the scope of the present invention to have all of the sides of the tile 2 formed with oppositely disposed projections 15 and slots 17. Alternatively, adjacent sides of the tile may be formed with either a plurality of projections 15 or a plurality of slots 17, or each of one or more sides of the tile may include an alternating or mixed pattern of projections 15 and slots 17.

[0060] Individual rubber tiles 2 formed in accordance with the second embodiment shown in FIGS. 10-19 may also be joined together by cooperatively mating the male connectors 14 on the first and second lateral sides of a first tile 2 with the female receptacles 16 on the third and fourth lateral sides of a second tile. In this second embodiment of the tile, the projections 15 of one tile 2 also cooperatively mate with the slots 17 of a second tile 2. The mating of the projections 15 and the slots 17 strengthens the connection between the first and second tiles 2. The engagement of the projections 15 and slots 17 also reduces the tendency of the lateral sides of the tile to curl upwardly or separate and helps maintain the top surfaces 4 of the joined together tiles in a common plane.

[0061] It is also envisioned to be within the scope of the present invention to fasten the tiles 2 to a supporting surface, such as asphalt or wood, by using screws or other fasteners 54 which pass through the thickness of the male connectors 14

preferably at the horizontal first segments 18 thereof and into the supporting surface, with or without the use of liquid adhesive between mating tiles 2. For this purpose, a counter-sunk recess 52 may be formed in the glue reservoir 24 of the horizontal first segment 18 of one or more male connectors 14 to facilitate locating where the screw or fastener 54 should be placed, as shown in FIGS. 14, 15 and 18.

[0062] The tiles 2 of the first and second embodiments may be formed from reprocessed or recycled rubber, for example, from shredded or pulverized rubber automobile tires. In another form of the present invention, a top layer or portion of each tile may be formed from EPDM (ethylene propylene diene monomer) granules or shredded or pulverized white, gray or yellow (i.e., light colored) rubber tires, such as those found on forklifts and other rubber wheeled equipment. This lighter colored top layer of the tile may be about one-half (1/2) inch in thickness, and the remainder bottom portion of the tile may be black and made from shredded or pulverized conventional black walled automobile tires. Tiles formed with such a lighter colored top layer may be about twenty percent (20%) cooler, or more, on its top surface than tiles formed completely from conventional black walled automobile tires.

[0063] The interlocking rubber tiles are described herein as being particularly useful for playgrounds. However, it should be realized that the tiles have many different uses, including, for example, for covering rooftop surfaces and other athletic and recreational surfaces.

[0064] Although illustrative embodiments of the present invention have been described herein with reference to the accompanying drawings, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to those precise embodiments, and that various other changes and modifications may be effected therein by one skilled in the art without departing from the scope or spirit of the invention.

1. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile, which comprises:

- a main body having a top surface and a bottom surface disposed opposite the top surface, the main body having at least a first lateral side and a second lateral side;

- at least one male connector situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body and extending outwardly therefrom;

- at least one female receptacle situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body;

- at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body having formed therein at least one slot; and

- at least one projection situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body;

- wherein the male connector of the tile is engageable with a female receptacle of an adjacent tile so that the tile may interlock with the adjacent tile;

- wherein the projection of the tile is receivable by a slot of an adjacent tile so that the tile may further interlock with the adjacent tile;

- wherein the main body of the tile resides generally in a plane;

- wherein the male connector includes a first segment extending outwardly from the main body co-planarly with the main body, and a second segment joined to the first segment and extending perpendicularly to the first segment;

and wherein the female receptacle includes an inner wall, an outer wall disposed opposite the inner wall, side walls interposed between the inner wall and the outer wall, and a recessed bottom wall, the inner wall, outer wall, side walls and bottom wall of the female receptacle defining a recess for at least partially receiving the second segment of the male connector of an adjacent tile to interlock the tile with the adjacent tile

2. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 1, wherein at least one of the male connector and the female receptacle includes structure defining a reservoir for containing an adhesive for adhesively securing the tile and an adjacent tile together.

3. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 2, wherein the at least one of the male connector and the female receptacle having the structure defining a reservoir further includes structure defining a slot, the slot being in communication with the reservoir to allow excess adhesive to flow from the reservoir therethrough.

4. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 1, wherein the first segment of the male connector has formed therein a glue reservoir for receiving a glue for adhesively joining the tile to an adjacent tile.

5. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 4, wherein the second segment of the male connector has formed therein a slot, the slot being in communication with the glue reservoir formed in the first segment of the male connector to allow excess glue to flow from the glue reservoir of the male connector therethrough.

6. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 1, wherein the female receptacle defines a glue reservoir for receiving a glue for adhesively joining the tile to an adjacent tile.

7. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 6, wherein the glue reservoir of the female receptacle is formed in the recessed bottom surface.

8. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 6, wherein the outer wall of the female receptacle has formed therein a slot, the slot being in communication with the glue reservoir formed in the female receptacle to allow excess glue to flow from the glue reservoir of the female receptacle therethrough.

9. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 1, wherein the first segment of the male connector has formed therein a glue reservoir for receiving a glue for adhesively joining the tile to an adjacent tile;

and wherein the female receptacle defines a glue reservoir for receiving a glue for adhesively joining the tile to an adjacent tile.

10. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 1, wherein the top surface of the main body of the tile has formed therein at least one recess, the at least one recess defining a water channel through which water may flow.

11. A tile for covering an area which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 1, wherein the main body of the tile includes peripheral edges situated at the top surface thereof, the peripheral edges being beveled to form chamfers, the chamfer of one peripheral edge of the tile being situated in

parallel with and adjacent to the chamfer of a peripheral edge of an adjacent tile so as to define together a water channel through which water may flow.

12. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile as defined by claim 1, wherein the main body includes a plurality of the male connectors situated on the at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body, the male connectors being spaced apart from each other;

wherein the main body includes a plurality of the female receptacles situated on the at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body, the female receptacles being spaced apart from each other;

wherein the at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body has formed therein a plurality of the slots, a respective slot of the plurality of slots being situated between either a pair of spaced apart male connectors which are adjacent to each other or a pair of spaced apart female receptacles which are adjacent to each other; and

wherein the at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body has formed therein a plurality of the projections, a respective projection of the plurality of projections being situated between either a pair of spaced apart female receptacles which are adjacent to each other or a pair of spaced apart male connectors which are adjacent to each other.

13. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile, which comprises:

a main body having a top surface and a bottom surface disposed opposite the top surface, the main body having at least a first lateral side and a second lateral side;

at least one male connector situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body and extending outwardly therefrom; and

at least one female receptacle situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body;

wherein the male connector of the tile is engageable with a female receptacle of an adjacent tile so that the tile may interlock with the adjacent tile;

wherein the main body of the tile resides generally in a plane;

wherein the male connector includes a first segment extending outwardly from the main body co-planarly with the main body, and a second segment joined to the first segment and extending perpendicularly to the first segment;

wherein the female receptacle includes an inner wall, an outer wall disposed opposite the inner wall, sidewalls interposed between the inner wall and the outer wall, and a recessed bottom wall, the inner wall, outer wall, sidewalls and bottom wall of the female receptacle defining a recess for at least partially receiving the second segment of the male connector of an adjacent tile to interlock the tile with the adjacent tile;

wherein the female receptacle defines a glue reservoir for receiving a glue for adhesively joining the tile to an adjacent tile; and

wherein the inner wall of the female receptacle has formed therein a channel, the channel being in communication with the glue reservoir formed in the female receptacle and extending from the glue reservoir in a direction toward the bottom surface of the main body of the tile.

14. A tile for covering an area and which interlocks with an adjacent tile, which comprises:

a main body having a top surface and a bottom surface disposed opposite the top surface, the main body having at least a first lateral side and a second lateral side;

at least one male connector situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body and extending outwardly therefrom; and

at least one female receptacle situated on at least one of the first lateral side and the second lateral side of the main body;

wherein the male connector of the tile is engageable with a female receptacle of an adjacent tile so that the tile may interlock with the adjacent tile;

wherein the main body of the tile resides generally in a plane;

wherein the male connector includes a first segment extending outwardly from the main body co-planarly

with the main body, and a second segment joined to the first segment and extending perpendicularly to the first segment;

wherein the female receptacle includes an inner wall, an outer wall disposed opposite the inner wall, sidewalls interposed between the inner wall and the outer wall, and a recessed bottom wall, the inner wall, outer wall, sidewalls and bottom wall of the female receptacle defining a recess for at least partially receiving the second segment of the male connector of an adjacent tile to interlock the tile with the adjacent tile;

wherein the female receptacle defines a glue reservoir for receiving a glue for adhesively joining the tile to an adjacent tile; and

wherein the male connector further includes a recess formed in the first segment thereof, the recess being provided for locating a fastener in the first segment of the male connector to secure the tile to a supporting substrate.

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