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(54) **Air drilling system and method for containing and separating cuttings**

(57) Cuttings are removed from air drilling fluid used in an air drilling system by delivering the cuttings and air drilling fluid into an air-tight enclosure (22), decreasing the flow rate of the air through the enclosure (22) to allow the cuttings to settle and separate from the airflow and be contained within the enclosure (22). The air, substan-

tially devoid of the cuttings, is discharged. The enclosure (22) is positioned at an angle to facilitate the discharge of the contained cuttings. Preferably, the enclosure (22) is of a size which will allow it to be transported on public highways without special movement permits, and the exhilarating equipment used may be contained within the enclosure (22) during transportation.

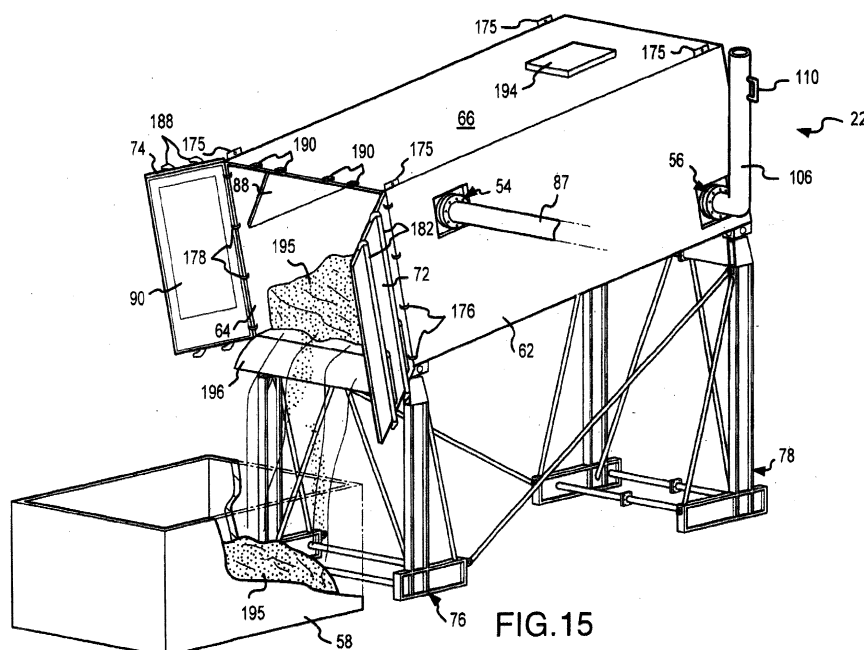


FIG. 15

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 5 July 2001	Examiner van Berlo, A
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