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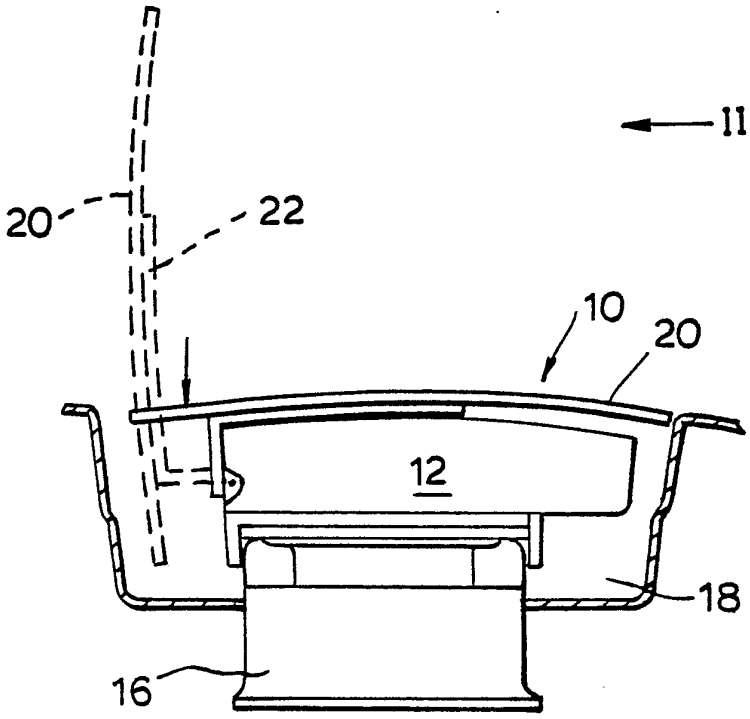
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(54) Title: FILLER CAP



(57) Abstract

A filler cap (10) for a fuel tank of a motor vehicle, the mouth of the filler spout (16) of which is arranged in a recess (18) in the vehicle body. The filler cap (10) comprises a body (12) to fit over the mouth of the filler spout (16), and a lock mechanism (14) rotatable relative to the body (12) for locking the filler cap body (10) to the spout (16). A cover plate (20) hinged on the body (12) is pivotable between a first position in which the cover plate (20) is flush with the vehicle body and covers the fuel spout recess (18), and a second position in which access may be gained to the lock mechanism (16).

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FILLER CAP

The present invention relates to a filler cap for the fuel tank of a motor vehicle.

It is known to place the filler cap of a motor vehicle in a recess covered by a hinged panel which is painted to match the remainder of the vehicle body. In this way the appearance of the vehicle is not marred by the filler cap. However, such a construction is relatively costly and for this reason it is only to be found on more expensive vehicles.

The invention seeks to provide a filler cap which can blend in with the vehicle body but can be manufactured with less expense.

According to the invention, there is provided a filler cap for a fuel tank of a motor vehicle the mouth of the filler spout of which is arranged in a recess in the vehicle body, the filler cap comprising a body to fit over the mouth of the filler spout, a lock mechanism rotatable relative to the said body for locking the filler cap body to the spout, and a cover plate hinged on the body, the cover plate being pivotable between a first position in which the cover plate is flush with the vehicle body and covers the fuel spout recess, and a second position in which access may be gained to the lock mechanism.

In the invention, the decorative cover plate which lies flush with the vehicle bodywork and may be painted to match, is pivotably secured to the filler cap rather than to the vehicle body. In this way, the same aesthetic appeal may be obtained but with reduced expense.

The invention will now be described further, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which :

Figure 1 is a side view of a filler cap fitted to the fuel spout of a motor vehicle with the cover plate shown in two different positions, and

Figure 2 is a view in the direction of arrow II in Figure 1 with the cover plate open.

The filler cap 10 in the drawings has a body 12 which fits over a fuel body spout 14. The body is not, as in some known constructions, rotatable relative to the spout 14 but instead has a key operated lock mechanism 16 which can rotate relative to the body 10 to lock the body 12 to the filler spout 14. The body 12 and lock mechanism 16 are conventional and need not therefore be described in detail but it is noted that the orientation of the filler cap 10 relative to the spout 14 and thus relative to the vehicle body is predetermined.

In order to cover the recess 18 in which the spout 14 is located, a decorative cover plate 20 is pivotably mounted on the body 12 by means of a hinge 22. In Figure 1, the cover plate 20 is shown in solid lines in its open position and in dotted lines in its closed position. It will be seen that in the open position access may be gained to the lock mechanism so that the latter may be rotated by key to permit the filler cap 10 to be removed from the spout 14, complete with the cover plate 20. In the closed position, on the other hand, the cover plate 20 lies flush with the vehicle body to cover the recess 18 and give the same appearance as a vehicle in which a cover is hinged onto the vehicle body for the purpose of disguising the filler spout recess.

The hinge 22 is L shaped and has resilient limbs which snap resiliently over a corner of the body 10. In this way, the resilience of the hinge 22 suffices to keep the cover plate closed, without rattling. To uncover the lock mechanism, pressure is applied by finger to the cover plate 20 at a point P adjacent the hinge 22, the resilience of the hinge now keeping the cover plate 20 away from the lock mechanism 16.

CLAIMS

1. A filler cap for a fuel tank of a motor vehicle the mouth of the filler spout of which is arranged in a recess in the vehicle body, the filler cap comprising a body to fit over the mouth of the filler spout, a lock mechanism rotatable relative to the said body for locking the filler cap body to the spout, and a cover plate hinged on the body, the cover plate being pivotable between a first position in which the cover plate is flush with the vehicle body and covers the fuel spout recess, and a second position in which access may be gained to the lock mechanism.

2. A filler cap as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hinge is an L shaped hinge with resilient limbs.

3. A filler cap substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

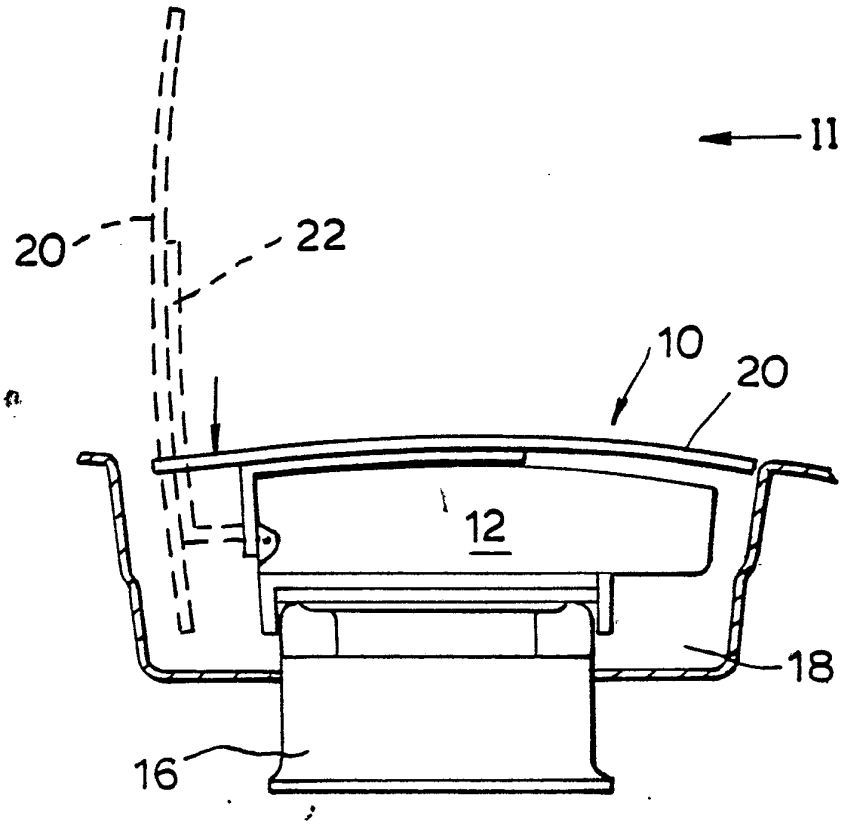


FIG. 1.

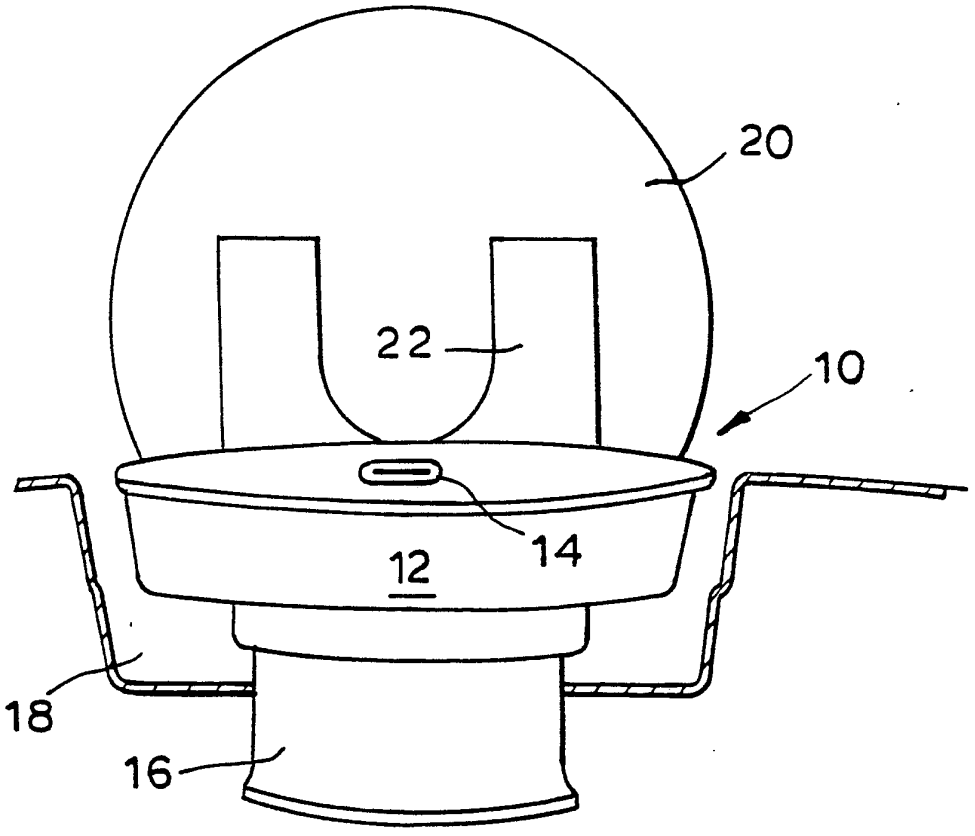


FIG. 2.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No PCT/GB 86/00489

I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER (if several classification symbols apply, indicate all) [6]

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC

IPC[4]: B 60 K 15/04; B 65 D 51/00

II. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum Documentation Searched [7]

Classification System	Classification Symbols
IPC[4]	B 60 K; B 65 D

Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation to the Extent that such Documents are Included in the Fields Searched [8]

III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT [9]

Category [10]	Citation of Document, [11] with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages [12]	Relevant to Claim No. [13]
Y	EP, A, 0096604 (CITROEN) 21 December 1983, see page 2, line 26 - page 3, line 11; figure 1	1,2
Y	US, A, 2893233 (SCHULTZ) 7 July 1959, see column 3, lines 12-27; figure 1	1,2
A	FR, A, 2538785 (NEIMAN) 6 June 1984, see page 1, line 33 - page 2, line 24; figure 1	1
A	GB, A, 728648 (AUTO UNION) 20 April 1955, see page 1, lines 65-82; figures 2,3	1
A	DE, A, 2835603 (NISSAN SHATAI) 28 February 1980, see page 5, lines 20-26; figures 1,3	1,2
A	DE, A, 3118267 (KONSTRUKTIVE KUNSTSTOFF) 9 June 1982, see page 19, lines 14-19; figures 11-20	2

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* Special categories of cited documents: [10]

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IV. CERTIFICATION

Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search	Date of Mailing of this International Search Report
14th November 1986	18 DEC 1986
International Searching Authority	**Signature of Authorized Officer**
EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE	M. VAN MOL

ANNEX TO THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT ON

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/GB 86/00489 (SA 14219)

This Annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on 21/11/86

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Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
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		JP-A-	59037156	29/02/84
		US-A-	4498600	12/02/85
US-A- 2893233		None		
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GB-A- 728648		None		
DE-A- 2835603	28/02/80	None		
DE-A- 3118267	09/06/82	DE-A-	3129253	10/02/83