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MAIL BOX INDICATOR FLAG

Filed July 17, 1959

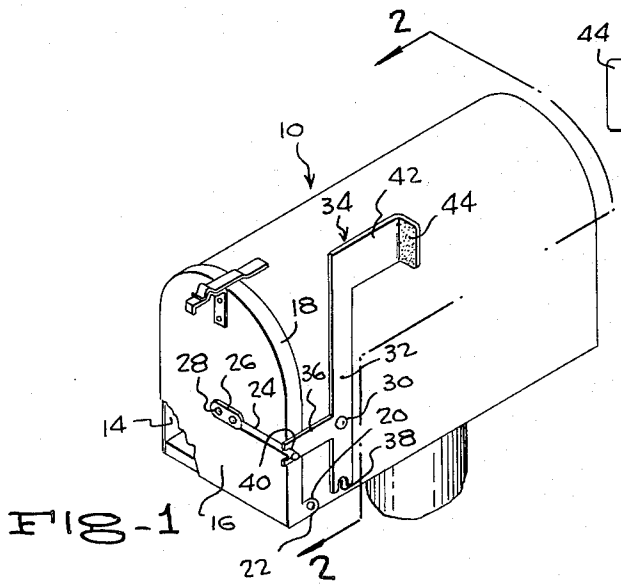


FIG-1

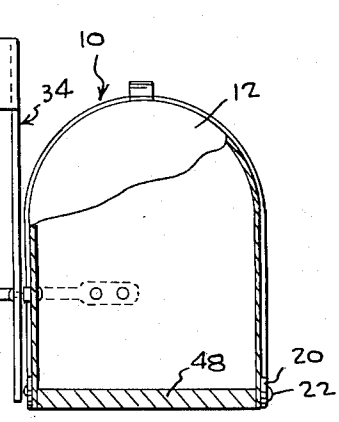


FIG-2

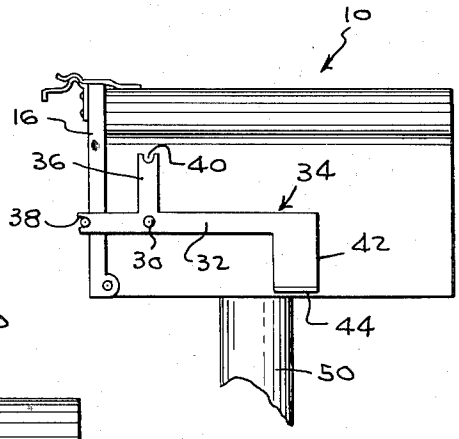
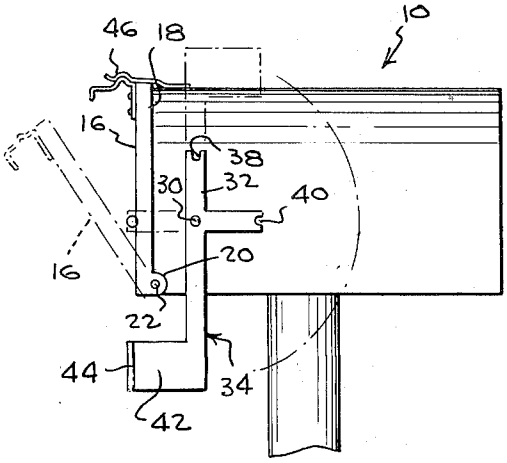


FIG-3

FIG-4



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MAIL BOX INDICATOR FLAG

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The present invention relates to rural mail boxes generally and more particularly to an indicator flag for incorporation in a mail box for indicating when mail has been picked up from the mail box or delivered to the mail box.

Previously proposed and presently in use are rural mail boxes having signal means for indicating when mail has been delivered thereto or mail has been picked up therefrom. Generally, such devices depend upon the opening of the door of the mail box for actuation. Such devices as have been proposed are not fully satisfactory for the reason that most of them are complicated to the extreme, fail to signal when mail has been picked up from the associated box or fail to indicate when mail has been delivered to the box in such a manner as to be clearly understandable to the householder and user of the mail box. Additionally, some of the devices purposed or in use require the attention of the person delivering the mail for actuation thereof. Negligence or carelessness on the part of the person delivering the mail frequently results in the spurious signal which gives rise to considerable annoyance to the householder.

An object of the present invention is to provide an indicator flag for a rural mail box which may be employed to signal the person delivering the mail that there is mail to be picked up and, after the mail has been picked up, the indicator flag indicates to the householder that the mail has been picked up.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an indicator flag for a rural mail box which has means for indicating to the person delivering the mail that there is no mail to be picked up, which indicator flag is operable to indicate whether or not the person delivering the mail has opened the box for delivery of mail into the box.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a rural mail box indicator flag which is simply constructed, one sturdily constructed, one attached to a mail box with ease and facility, one which is highly effective in action, one which is economically feasible.

These and other objects and advantages of the present invention will be fully apparent from the following description when taken in conjunction with the annexed drawing, in which:

FIGURE 1 is an isometric view of the mail box according to the present invention with the indicator flag in position to indicate that there is mail in the box to be picked up, a portion of the door being shown broken away,

FIGURE 2 is a sectional view on the line 2—2 of FIGURE 1,

FIGURE 3 is a side elevational view showing the indicator flag in position to indicate to the person picking up the mail that there is no mail to be picked up, and

FIGURE 4 is an elevational view showing the indicator flag indicating to the householder that the box has been opened for either picking up mail or delivering mail thereto, the dotted line showing indicating the door in partially open position and also showing the path of movement of the indicator flag as the door is opened.

Referring in greater detail to the drawing in which like numerals indicate like parts throughout the several views, the mail box of the present invention comprises a casing **10** having one end **12** closed and the other end **14** opened. A door **16**, hinged at the bottom, normally closes the opened end **14** of the casing **10**.

The door **16** has a flange **18** projecting from its perimeter overlying the adjacent end portion of the open end **14** of the casing **10**. Tabs **20** project from the flange **18** on each side of the mail box or casing **10** and are connected by loose rivets **22** to the sides of the mail box or casing **10** for swinging movement of the door **16** from the full line position in FIGURE 4 closing the open end of the casing **10** to open position as shown in dotted lines.

A horizontally disposed latching element embodying a pin **24** is carried on the outer face of the door **16** and projects across the side edge of the mail box or casing **10**. One end of the pin is flattened as at **26** and is secured by other rivets **28** to the door **16**.

An indicator flag is positioned in a vertical direction exteriorly of and adjacent the side edge of the casing **10** over which the pin **24** projects. The indicator flag is connected by its long leg **32** to the casing **10** for movement about a horizontal axis from the vertical direction position to a horizontal position or to a lowered direction position. A loose rivet **30** extends through the side wall of the casing **10** and through the long leg **32** of the indicator flag inwardly of and spaced from one end of the long leg **32**. The indicator flag is designated generally by the reference numeral **34**.

A bar member **36** projects perpendicularly from the indicator flag long leg **32** at a point contiguous to the rivet **30**. Means embodying notches **38** and **40** on the long leg **32** and the bar member **36**, respectively, on the other end of the long leg **32** and the free end of the bar member **36**, receivingly embrace the projecting end part of the pin **24** for holding the indicator flag **34** in the vertical direction position, as shown in FIGURE 1, or in the horizontal position as shown in FIGURE 3.

The indicator flag **34** is operable under the force of gravity to shift from the vertical position or the horizontal position to the lowered directed position when the door **16** is moved to open position. The short leg **42** of the indicator flag **34** carries on its free end an outwardly turned flange **44** which may have one or both of its sides colored with a distinctive coating of paint or other material so as to constitute a signal visible from a distance. Because of the offset relation of the flange **44** relative to the rivet **30** which supports the indicator flag **34** on the mail box or casing **10**, upon opening of the door **16** the indicator flag **34** will execute swinging movement in the clockwise direction responsive to the action of gravity from the position in which it has been set to the position shown in FIGURE 4 in which the short leg **42** is lowered below the casing **10** and one face of the flange **44** faces to the rear of the casing **10** and is visible from the household employing the casing **10**.

A conventional latch assembly **46** secures the door **16** in the closed position and a floor **48** and post **50** connected to the floor **48** support the casing **10** above a ground surface in the conventional manner.

In use, when there is mail to be picked up by the person charged with delivery and collection of the mail, the indicator flag **34** is swung to the position shown in FIGURE 1 which indicates to such person that there is mail to be collected. Upon opening of the door **16**, the indicator flag **34** will swing from the upstanding position to the position shown in FIGURE 4 under the action of gravity.

Alternatively, if there is no mail to be picked up the householder may position the indicator flag **34** as in FIGURE 3 and if there is mail to be delivered upon opening of the door **16** the indicator flag **34** will again swing to the position shown in FIGURE 4.

What is claimed is:

1. A mail box comprising a casing closed at one end and open at the other end, a door normally closing the open end of said casing and connected to said casing for

swinging movement from the closed position to an open position, a horizontally disposed latching element on the outer face of said door and projecting across a side edge of said casing, an indicator flag positioned in a vertical direction exteriorly of and adjacent said side edge of said casing, said flag having a long leg and a short leg projecting from one end thereof, said long leg being connected intermediate its ends to said casing for movement about a horizontal axis from the vertical position to a horizontal position or a lowered position below said casing, a bar member projecting perpendicularly from said indicator flag long leg intermediate said short leg and the other end of said long leg, said bar member having a free end, means on the other end of said indicator flag long leg releasably and embracingly receiving said latching element when the door is in the closed position to hold said indicator flag in the horizontal direction position, and means on the free end of said bar member embracingly receiving said latch element when the door is in the closed position to hold said indicator flag in the vertical position.

2. A mail box comprising a casing closed at one end and open at the other end, a door normally closing the open end of said casing and connected to said casing for swinging movement from the closed position to an open position, a horizontally disposed latching element embodying a pin on the outer face of said door and projecting across a side edge of said casing, an indicator flag positioned in a vertical direction exteriorly of and adjacent said side edge of said casing, said flag having a long leg and a short leg projecting from one end thereof, said long leg being connected intermediate its ends to said casing for movement about a horizontal axis from the vertical position to a horizontal position or a lowered position below said casing, a bar member projecting perpendicularly from said indicator flag long leg intermediate said short leg and the other end of said indicator flag long leg, said bar member having a free end, means embodying a notch on the other end of said indicator flag long leg releasably and embracingly receiving said pin when the door is in the closed position to hold said indicator flag in the horizontal direction position, and means embodying a notch on the free end of said bar member embracingly receiving said pin when the door is in the closed position to hold said indicator flag in the vertical position, said indicator flag being operable to shift from the vertical direction position to the lowered position responsive to the force of gravity and movement of said door to the open position and release of said pin with said indicator flag long leg notch.

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