March 31, 1964 W. J. OEHRLEIN 3,127,225

ARTICLE DISPENSER

Filed Feb. 1, 1961

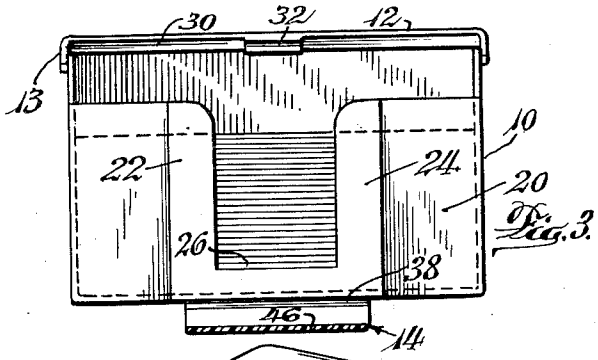


Fig. 3.

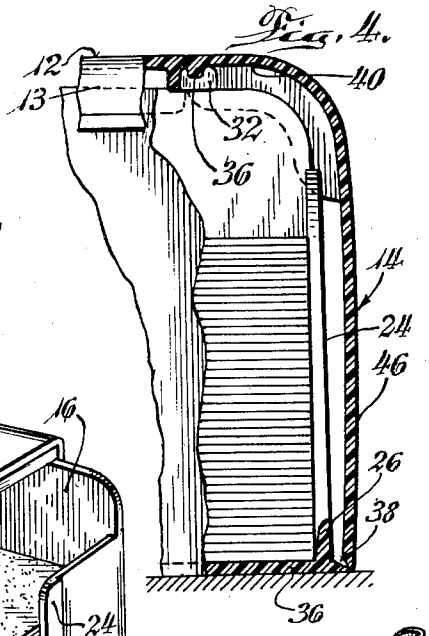


Fig. 4.

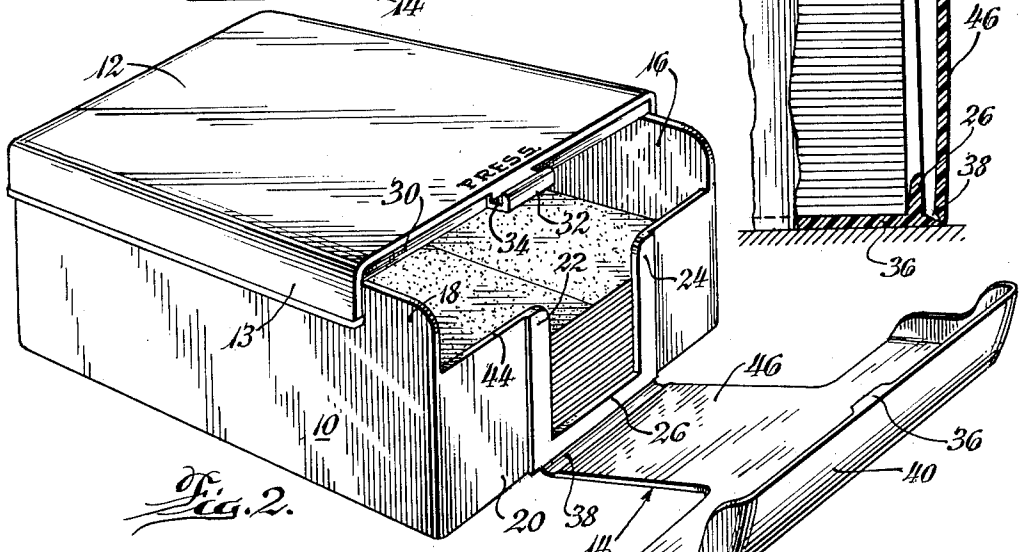


Fig. 2.

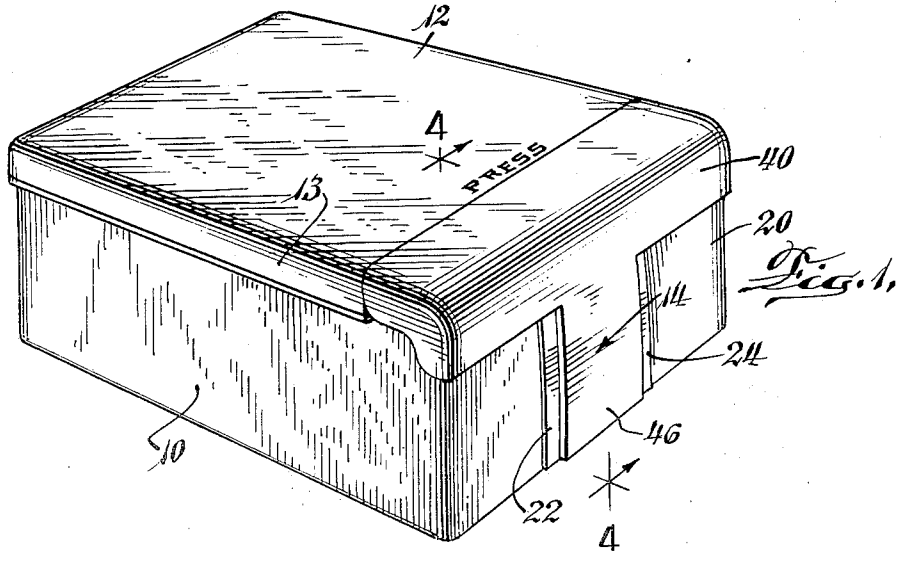


Fig. 1.

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ARTICLE DISPENSER

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This invention relates to improvement in article dispensers.

A primary object of the invention is to provide an improved dispenser particularly adapted for the convenient storage and dispensing of paper towels and the like.

A further object is to provide an improved low cost dispenser which may be fabricated of plastic materials by known production techniques.

Another object is to provide an attractive end type dispenser particularly adapted for use in barber shops and beauty parlors for the convenient dispensing of paper barber towels and the like.

Other adaptations and modifications of the invention will become readily apparent to persons skilled in the art upon examination of the drawings, description, and appended claims.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a paper towel dispenser incorporating the invention principles,

FIG. 2 shows in perspective the dispenser of FIG. 1, with the front closure member thereof hinged open to permit access to the contents,

FIG. 3 is a front elevational view of the dispenser of FIGS. 1 and 2, with the front end closure member also shown hinged open, and broken off,

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary elevational view, in partial section, showing the front end closure member in locked position.

Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, a dispenser incorporating the invention comprises generally a boxlike article storage container portion **10** of generally rectangular configuration, a hinged cover **12**, and a hinged end closure member **14**. The three components comprising the dispenser preferably are of a moldable plastic material and may be unitarily fabricated by known molding techniques. While the invention is not limited to a specific type of material, the physical properties of polypropylene render that material ideally suited for use for reasons stated below.

Container portion **10** includes opposite side walls **16**, **18**, and a back wall (not shown) of equal height, the front wall **20** being of reduced height as best shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. Front wall **20** is centrally provided with an upwardly open dispensing opening marginally defined by thickened portions which serve to reinforce the opening along the sides **22**, **24** and along the bottom **26** thereof. The thickened front wall portion also adds to the attractiveness of the dispenser when closed, as shown in FIG. 1.

Cover **12** is hinged to the rear wall of container **10** in a known manner, and preferably by a thin strip-like hinge portion, preferably an integral portion intermediate container portion **10** and cover **12** as unitarily formed by a single molding operation. The front end of cover **12** terminates short of the container front wall **20**, as best shown in FIGS. 2 and 4, with the cover lip **13** extending along the sides and back thereof. The front cover margin **30** is centrally provided with an extending locking fixture **32** transversely channeled at **34** to receive a hasp **36** integrally formed at a corresponding position of the top margin of closure member **14** for locking engagement therebetween, as shown in FIG. 4.

Closure member **14** is preferably formed as an integral extension of the bottom wall **36** of container **10** with a thickness reducing groove **38** provided therein to extend along the base of the centrally thickened portion of front wall **20**. Closure member **14**, of generally T configuration, includes a top portion **40** of a width equal to that of cover **12** and of proper arcuate configuration to nest against the front end of container **10** and its cover **12** in a manner to close the opening between front margin **30** of cover **12** and the top margin **44** of front wall **20** when member **14** is hinged from the open position of FIG. 2 to the closed position of FIG. 1. Leg portion **46** of member **14** is of a width simultaneously to close and overlap the front wall dispenser opening. Cover **12** is sufficiently flexible to allow fixture **32** momentarily to be depressed by hasp **35** as member **14** is hinged into closed position and to then spring back into a locking position with hasp **36** held in channel **34**.

As is apparent, the dispenser is constructed in a manner permitting fabrication by known high speed plastic molding techniques. For example, container **10**, closure member **14**, and cover **12** may unitarily be formed in a single mold of suitable design from polypropylene. Polypropylene offers the desirable feature that when grooved as at **38** a resulting flexible hinge line withstands fatigue during many thousands of hinging operations. If desired, container **10** and closure member **14** may be formed in separate molding operations with member **14** thereafter suitably heat fused to container **10** along the base portion of front wall **20**. Member **14** could, for example, be molded of polypropylene, with container **10** and cover **12** of a different plastic material, it being necessary of course that the container **10** be of a plastic to which polypropylene may be heat fused. Alternately, plastic materials which do not offer the same resistance to hinging as does polypropylene may be employed in fabricating the three major dispenser components, if such material allows fusion thereto of an insert of polypropylene which forms the hinge line along groove **38**.

The invention is not, however, limited solely to the use of plastic materials, it being apparent that metal sheet stock, for example, may be employed to form the three major components by known stamping techniques, with member **14** hinged to container **10** either by an integral hinge area of reduced thickness or by a suitable mechanical hinge. The improved dispenser, in addition to permitting low cost fabrication, is ideally suited for barbershop use, since when positioned on a shelf it requires a minimum of space while offering the many advantages of front end dispensing plus an attractive appearance when either open or closed.

I claim:

1. In an article dispenser of molded plastic material, a box-like base portion comprising a bottom wall, back and side walls of equal height, and a front wall of reduced height, said front wall being centrally provided with an upwardly open window-like aperture to facilitate removal of contents, a cover hinged to said back wall but terminating short of said front wall, to define, with said front wall aperture into which it leads, a dispenser opening of generally T configuration, and a closure member, integrally hinged at the base of said front wall and including a planar portion adapted, when hinged against the base portion, to close the T shaped front wall aperture, and a free end portion in substantial right angularity thereto adapted to close the top of the base portion forward of the cover, and pressure releasable means associated with the front margin of the cover and with the free end margin of the closure member for locking engagement therebetween when both cover and the closure member are hinged into nested engagement with said base portion.

2. An article dispenser of molded plastic material including in combination, a box-like base portion compris-

ing a bottom wall, back and side walls of equal height, and a front wall of reduced height, said front wall being provided with an upwardly open window-like aperture positioned centrally thereof and of a width substantially less than the width of the front wall to facilitate removal of the container contents, a cover hinged to said back wall but terminating short of said front wall, to define, with said front wall aperture into which it leads, a dispenser opening of generally T configuration, and a T shaped member hinged to said base portion below said front wall aperture for closure of said dispenser opening, said closure member including a lower leg portion of a width to close said front wall aperture and an enlarged upper end extending substantially the width of said cover, said upper end including a portion lying in the plane of said leg portion and a portion disposed in substantial right angularity thereto, whereby said cover and said enclosure member, when both hinged against said base portion, form a complete enclosure for both the top and the front wall thereof.

3. The device of claim 2 wherein said closure member and said cover are molded integrally with said base portion.

4. The device of claim 2 wherein said closure member is molded integrally with said base portion.

5. The device of claim 3 wherein the hinged portion of said closure member is polypropylene.

6. The device of claim 2 wherein said base portion is of molded plastic material, the bottom, side and back walls are of uniform thickness, a major portion of the front wall is of like thickness, and areas marginally of said window-like aperture are of increased thickness.

7. The device of claim 2 wherein said base portion and said closure member are integrally formed of polypropylene, and said closure member is provided marginally of the lower leg portion thereof with a transverse groove reducing the thickness thereof along a hinge line to facilitate movement of said closure member between

positions opening and closing said article dispensing opening.

8. An article dispenser of molded plastic sheet-like material including a generally rectangular box-like container including a bottom wall, side and back walls of equal height, and a front wall of reduced height centrally provided with an upwardly open dispensing opening, said side walls being provided above said front wall with arcuate corner portions, a closure member formed as an integral extension of said bottom wall to extend outwardly from the lower margin of said front wall and including a leg portion of sufficient width to close said central opening, and a free end comprising a portion of sufficient width to close the space above the front wall and a portion substantially normal thereto and receivable on top front portions of the side walls to serve as a partial cover, a major cover hinged to the back wall and extending to a position of abutment with the partial cover portion of said closure member, and pressure releasable locking means associated with the abutting margins of said major cover and the partial cover portion of said closure member.

9. The device of claim 7 wherein said pressure releasable locking means include tongue-and-groove type latching fixtures integrally formed respectively at the abutting margins of said cover and said closure member.

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