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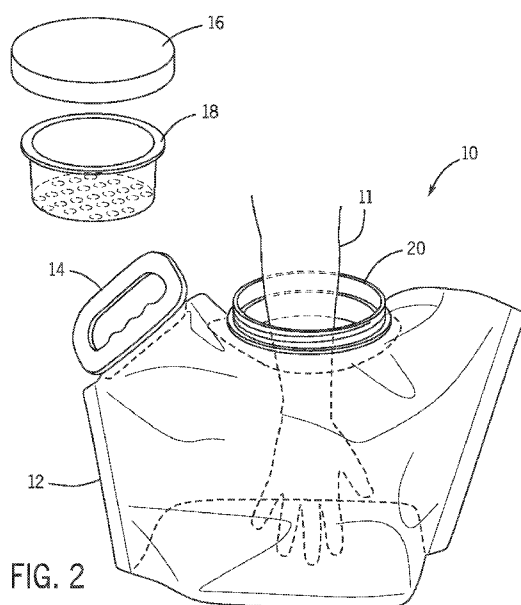
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(54) Title: COLLAPSIBLE FLUID COLLECTION CONTAINER



(57) Abstract: A fluid collection container includes a self-supporting, collapsible bag with a threaded cylindrical inlet ring or spout and a strainer removably seated within the ring. The strainer can separate a macroscopic solid object from a viscous liquid. The fluid collection container includes a rectangular prismatic box with the spout extending through and a threaded cap removably coupled to the spout. A method of draining automotive oil includes positioning the bag beneath an oil pan of an automobile, removing an oil plug from the automotive oil pan and allowing the oil plug to fall into the strainer; draining the automotive oil through the strainer into the bag; removing an oil filter from the automobile; removing the strainer from the inlet; inserting the oil filter; and screwing a threaded cap onto the inlet.



COLLAPSIBLE FLUID COLLECTION CONTAINER

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

5 This application claims the benefit of priority of U.S. provisional application number 62/704,928, filed June 3, 2020, the contents of which are herein incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

10

The present invention relates to a fluid collection container and, more particularly, to a collapsible container for collection of motor oil.

Existing oil collection containers are bulky, complex, and impractical for people who change their own engine's oil. Existing devices do not capture an engine's drain plug in a compact manner. Most, if not all of them, do not expand
15 when a liquid enters its cavity. Moreover, existing containers may leak when sealed and do not promote a viable means to recycle used engine oil easily.

As can be seen, there is a need for a simple device for collection of used engine oil.

20

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a collapsible bag that may fold into itself for easy storage. When unfolded and placed under a motor vehicle as the oil pan
25 drains, the bag may self-expand due to the weight of the viscous liquid. An inner threaded ring and sieve component allows motor oil to flow through easily while capturing an engine's drain plug. The inventive bag is compact and inexpensive to manufacture, making it affordable for the average consumer. The present invention

is advantageously less bulky than other oil collection devices, easily transported, simple, and easy to use.

In one aspect of the present invention, a fluid collection container is provided, comprising: a self-supporting, collapsible bag with a threaded cylindrical inlet ring and a strainer removably seated within the threaded cylindrical inlet ring,
5 said strainer being operative to separate a macroscopic solid object from a viscous liquid.

In another aspect of the present invention, a fluid collection container is provided, comprising: a rectangular prismatic box; a collapsible, self-supporting fluid
10 collection bag having a threaded cylindrical spout extending through an aperture in the box; a strainer removably resting within the threaded cylindrical spout; and a threaded cap removably coupled to the threaded cylindrical spout.

In another aspect of the present invention, a method of draining automotive oil is provided, comprising: positioning a self-supporting, collapsible bag
15 beneath an oil pan of an automobile, said self-supporting, collapsible bag having a threaded inlet with a strainer removably seated therein; removing an oil plug from the automotive oil pan and allowing the oil plug to fall into the strainer; draining the automotive oil through the strainer into the self-supporting, collapsible bag; removing an oil filter from the automobile; removing the strainer with the oil plug therein from
20 the threaded inlet; inserting the oil filter through the threaded inlet; and screwing a threaded cap onto the threaded inlet.

These and other features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following drawings, description, and claims.

25

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an oil change bag according to an embodiment of the present invention, shown in a collapsed condition;

FIG. 2 is an exploded perspective view thereof, shown in an expanded condition;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view thereof, shown in use during filling;

FIG. 4 is a top plan view thereof, shown in a filled condition;

5 FIG. 5 is a partially exploded perspective view thereof;

FIG. 6 is a partial perspective view of a portion of an oil change bag according to another embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 7 is an exploded perspective view thereof, shown in an expanded condition;

10 FIG. 8 is a perspective view thereof, shown in use during filling;

FIG. 9 is a perspective view thereof, shown in a filled condition;

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a boxed oil change bag according to another embodiment of the present invention, shown in a collapsed condition;

15 FIG. 11 is an exploded perspective view thereof, shown in an expanded condition;

FIG. 12 is a perspective view thereof, shown in use during filling;

FIG. 13 is a perspective view thereof, shown in a filled condition;

FIG. 14 is a perspective view thereof, shown with additional containers in a stacked configuration;

20 FIG. 15 is an exploded perspective view of another embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 16 is a detail perspective view thereof; and

FIG. 17 is a sectional view thereof, taken along line 17—17 in FIG. 16.

25 **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION**

The following detailed description is of the best currently contemplated modes of carrying out exemplary embodiments of the invention. The description is not to be taken in a limiting sense but is made merely for the purpose of illustrating

the general principles of the invention, since the scope of the invention is best defined by the appended claims.

5 Broadly, one embodiment of the present invention is a collapsible fluid collection container comprising a bag, a threaded mouth or inlet ring, a sieve or strainer, and a threaded cap. The inventive device is easily collapsible, easily expanded without complexity, and may be easily and safely carried with a handle. The inventive container is not limited to use with motor oil and may be used to capture and transport any liquid, such as to collect vegetable oil. Moreover, the sieve may be used to filter any liquid and to extract foreign objects from contaminated
10 fluids, such as fuel. The sieve is advantageously operative to capture the drain plug when motor oil is drained into the device.

The inner ring, mouth, or spout of the bag and the sieve allow oil to flow into the bag without hindrance. The sieve is effective to capture an engine oil pan drain plug without obstructing oil flow into the bag. The sieve perforations or
15 apertures may be, but are not limited to, selected from the group consisting of round, square, rectangular, and triangular. The perforations may be symmetrical or asymmetrical. The threaded mouth allows the filled bag to be sealed with the threaded cap so it can be transported to a recycling facility.

20 In some embodiments, the collection bag may be formed with one or more handles.

In some embodiments, the collection bag is provided with a large spout and a removable/disposable sieve. The threaded ring may also serve as a spout that may be capped shut with a screwable cap, for example to seal used oil within the collection bag for transporting it to a recycle center. The spout or threaded ring may
25 have an inner lip that supports the sieve. Alternatively, the sieve may be provided with an external ledge that rests on the spout. The sieve may be removed to expand the bag to accept used engine oil. Once the opening is sealed, the bag may be carried to a recycle center.

In some embodiments, the bag may be self-standing or self-supporting. In other words, the bag maintains its structure without additional support. No supporting device is necessary. The bag may self-support even when expanded to a height less than the bag's maximum height, advantageously allowing the bag to be used regardless of available clearance. The self-standing bag generally comprises a sieve to capture the engine drain plug.

In some embodiments, an additional permeable trap component may be provided to capture an engine's drain plug. The permeable trap not only allows oil to flow freely; it may also serve as a tool to catch an oil drain plug.

In some embodiments, the cap comprises a collapsible spout and/or a valve.

In some embodiments, the plastic bag may be fused to an extruded, 3-dimensionally (3D) printed, or injection molded plastic spout, for example, by way of heat or by a gluing process.

In some embodiments, the sieve may be configured in the form of a perforated cup. In other embodiments, the sieve may be provided in the form of a perforated disc or coaster. In some cases, the disc-shaped sieve may enable a tighter seal between the cap and the threaded ring.

In some embodiments, the oil filter may also be recycled with the oil. The user may place the filter inside the bag before or after draining the oil.

In some embodiments, the bag is provided inside a box, such as an auto bottom box or a snap lock box. The box may be attached to the bag at the inlet ring. In some cases, the bag may be adhered to the interior of the box, such as with an adhesive. In other embodiments, the bag may be placed inside a box for easy storage and transport. The box may have one or more handles.

In some embodiments, the self-supporting bag may be provided as a kit with a separate box. Once the bag is filled, it may be placed into the box. The box may be sealed shut for transport to a recycling center. Multiple boxes may be stacked for easy transport and for storage.

The materials of manufacture are not particularly limited. The components may be manufactured of any suitable material, such as various polymeric materials. The bag may be manufactured from a material such as plastic, foil, paper, and a combination thereof. Preferably, the bag material is resistant to degradation by the fluid to be collected, e.g., the bag is oil resistant. The bag and handle(s) may be unitary, i.e., formed together as one unit from, for example, blown extruded plastic. For example, the handles may be cut out of the bag material. The inner ring and sieve may be made of a rigid or flexible molded material, around which the mouth of the bag may be stretched or heat shrunk. The box may be made, for example, of cardboard or plastic, which may, for example, have a rectangular prism shape.

A method of using the inventive fluid container may have the following steps. The bag may be removed from a small retail package in which it has been packed in a collapsed condition and may be expanded by removing the sieve and placing a hand inside the bag through the spout. Once the sieve has been reinserted in the spout, the device may be positioned under an automobile engine to capture used engine oil.

Referring to Figures 1 through 17, Figures 1 through 5 show an oil change and recycling container 10 according to a first embodiment of the invention. Figure 1 shows the container 10 in a collapsed configuration or condition. Figure 2 illustrates a method of expanding the self-supporting, collapsible bag 12 for use by inserting the user's hand 11 through the threaded opening 20 and into the bag 12 after the threaded cap 16 and sieve 18 have been removed. The handle 14 makes the container 10 much easier to carry. As shown in Figure 3, the container 10 may be used by draining oil 22 through the sieve 18 into the bag 12 until the bag 12 is full to a predetermined level. Figure 4 illustrates a full bag 12 uncapped and Figure 5 shows the threaded opening 20 sealed with the threaded cap 16, with the sieve 18 removed, ready for transport to a recycling facility.

Figures 6 through 9 show an oil change and recycling container 30 according to a second embodiment. Figure 6 shows a partial view of the oil change

and recycling container 30, with the sieve 18 hidden under the threaded cap at an opening of the bag 12. The bag 12 may be expanded by inserting the user's hand 11 through the threaded opening 20 after the threaded cap 16 and sieve 18 have been removed, as shown in Figure 7. As shown in Figures 8 and 9, oil 22 may be
5 drained through the sieve 18 and the container 30 may be capped 16 for storage and transport once the sieve 18 has been removed.

Figures 10 through 14 show an oil change and recycling container 40 according to a third embodiment. The container 40 includes a collapsible box 42 surrounding an oil collection bag 12 secured therein. The container 40 may be
10 expanded by raising inserting the user's hand 11 and raising the threaded opening 20, as shown in Figure 11. As shown in Figures 12 and 13, oil 22 may be drained through the sieve 18 into the bag 12 until filled to a predetermined level. The sieve 18 may be removed and the cap 16 may be installed onto the threaded opening 20 for storage and transport. The box 42 enables the user to stack several containers
15 40 as shown in Figure 14.

Figures 15 through 17 show an oil change and recycling container 10 according to a fourth embodiment. The container 10 has a lip 21 or ledge extending from the inner surface of the threaded opening 20 that supports a disc strainer 50.

It should be understood, of course, that the foregoing relates to exemplary
20 embodiments of the invention and that modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A fluid collection container comprising:
 - a) a self-supporting, collapsible bag with a threaded cylindrical inlet ring;
 - 5 and
 - b) a strainer removably seated within the threaded cylindrical inlet ring, said strainer being operative to separate an object from a viscous liquid.
- 10 2. The fluid collection container of claim 1, further comprising a threaded cap removably coupled to the threaded cylindrical inlet ring.
3. The fluid collection container of claim 1, wherein the threaded cylindrical inlet ring is a spout fused to the self-supporting, collapsible bag.
- 15 4. The fluid collection container of claim 1, wherein the strainer is configured as a perforated cup.
5. The fluid collection container of claim 1, wherein the threaded cylindrical inlet ring further comprises an inner lip and the strainer is configured as a perforated disc that rests on the inner lip.
- 20 6. The fluid collection container of claim 1, further comprising a collapsible box surrounding the self-supporting, collapsible bag and attached to the threaded cylindrical inlet ring.
- 25 7. The fluid collection container of claim 1, wherein the threaded cylindrical inlet ring supports the strainer.

8. The fluid collection container of claim 1, further comprising at least one handle.
- 5 9. The fluid collection container of claim 8, wherein the at least one handle is unitary with the self-supporting, collapsible bag.
10. A fluid collection container comprising:
- a) a rectangular prismatic box;
 - 10 b) a collapsible, self-supporting fluid collection bag having a threaded cylindrical spout extending through an aperture in the rectangular prismatic box;
 - c) a strainer removably resting within the threaded cylindrical spout; and
 - d) a threaded cap removably coupled to the threaded cylindrical spout.
- 15 11. The fluid collection container of claim 10, further comprising at least one handle.
- 20 12. The fluid collection container of claim 10, wherein the strainer has apertures with a shape selected from the group consisting of round, square, rectangular, and triangular.
- 25 13. The fluid collection container of claim 10, wherein the collapsible, self-supporting fluid collection bag is adhered to an interior of the rectangular prismatic box.
14. The fluid collection container of claim 10, wherein the collapsible, self-supporting fluid collection bag and the rectangular prismatic box are attached

at the threaded cylindrical spout.

15. A method of draining automotive oil, comprising:

- 5
- a) positioning a self-supporting, collapsible bag beneath an oil pan of an automobile, said self-supporting, collapsible bag having a threaded inlet with a strainer removably seated therein;
 - b) removing an oil plug from the oil pan and allowing the oil plug to fall into the strainer;
 - c) draining oil through the strainer into the self-supporting, collapsible bag;
 - 10 d) removing an oil filter from the automobile;
 - e) removing the strainer with the oil plug therein from the threaded inlet;
 - f) inserting the oil filter through the threaded inlet; and
 - g) screwing a threaded cap onto the threaded inlet.

15 16. The method of claim 15, further comprising removing the strainer from the threaded inlet and reinserting the strainer into the threaded inlet before removing the oil plug from the oil pan, wherein the steps of removing the oil filter from the automobile and inserting the oil filter through the threaded inlet precede reinserting the strainer into the threaded bag inlet.

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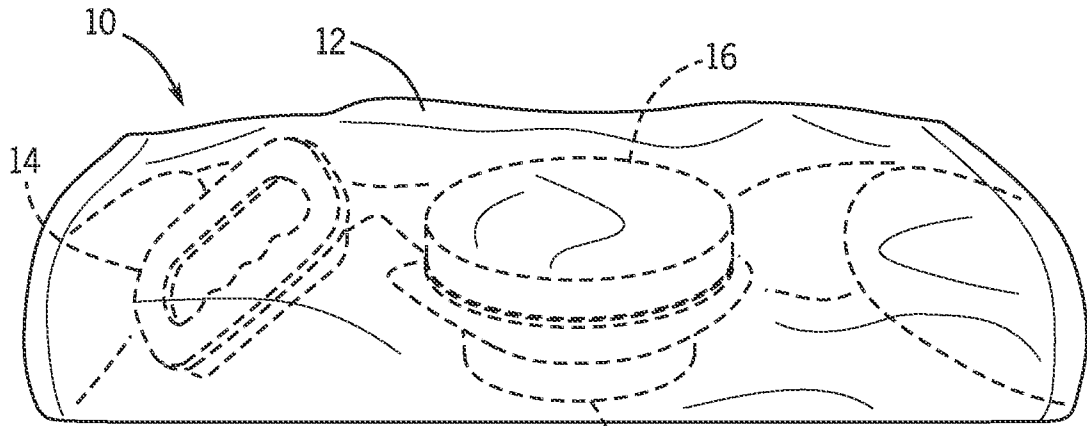


FIG. 1

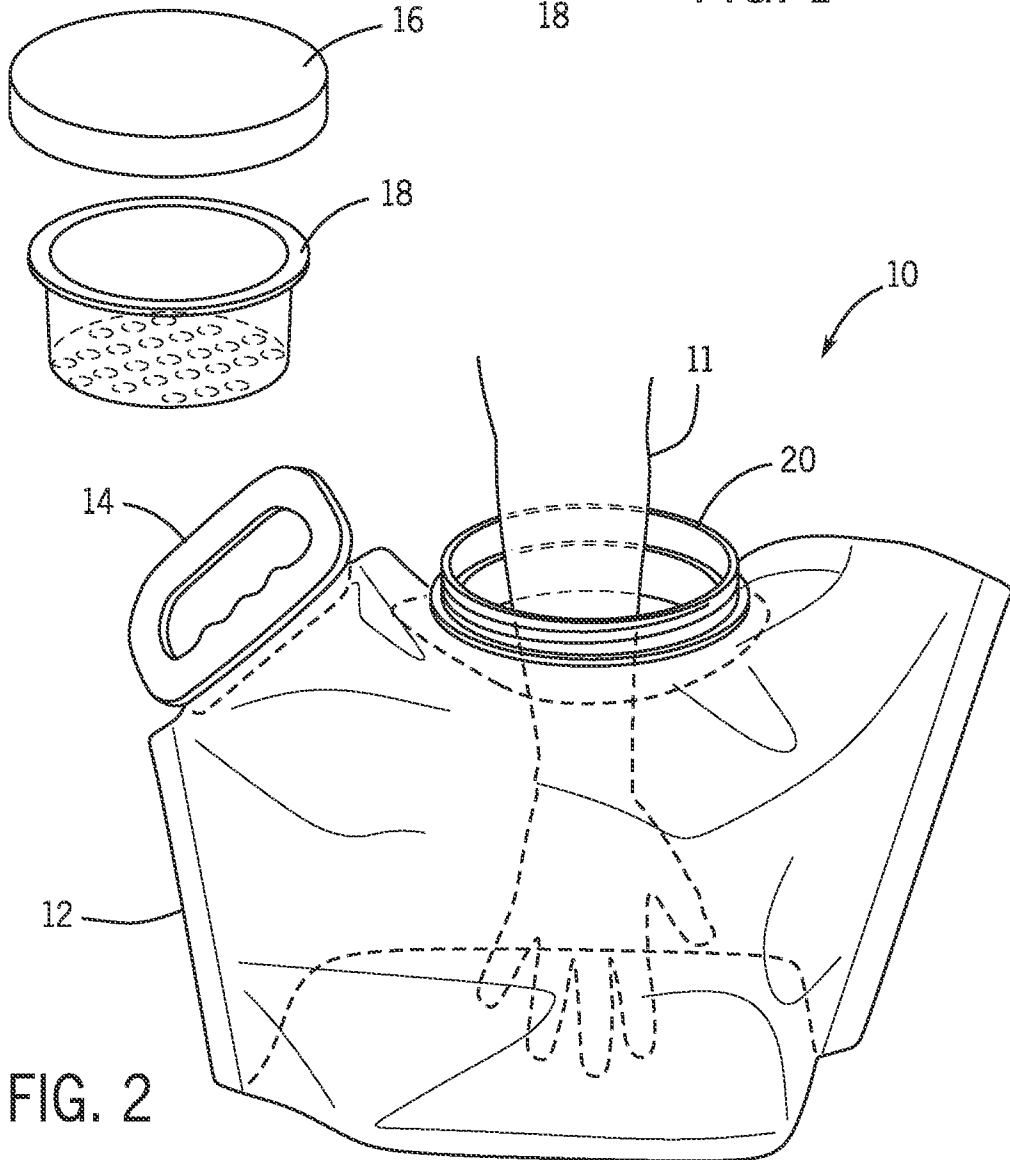


FIG. 2

2 / 9

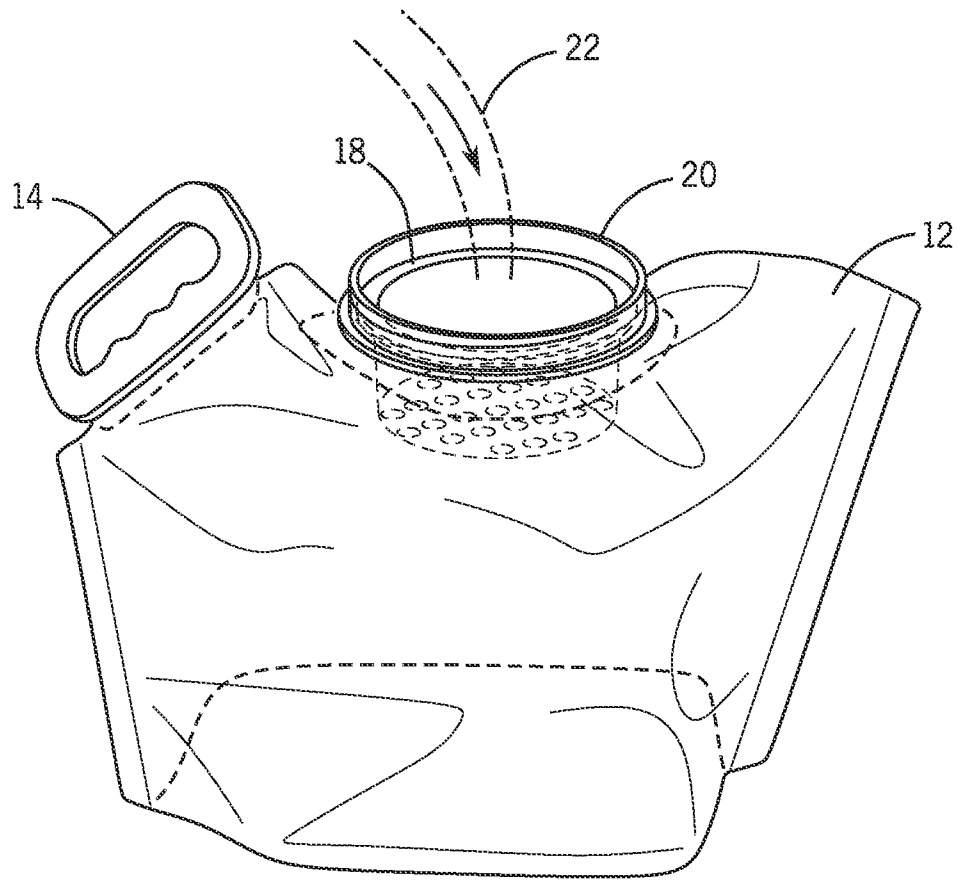


FIG. 3

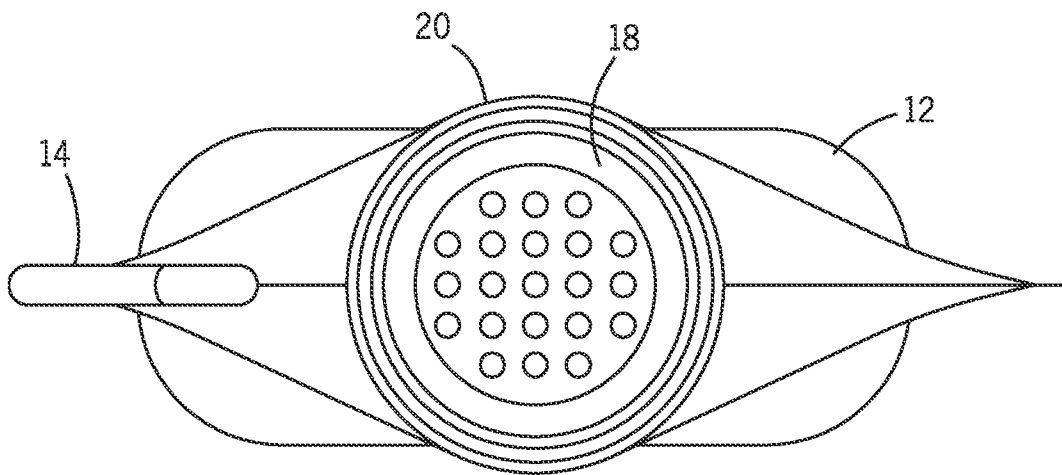


FIG. 4

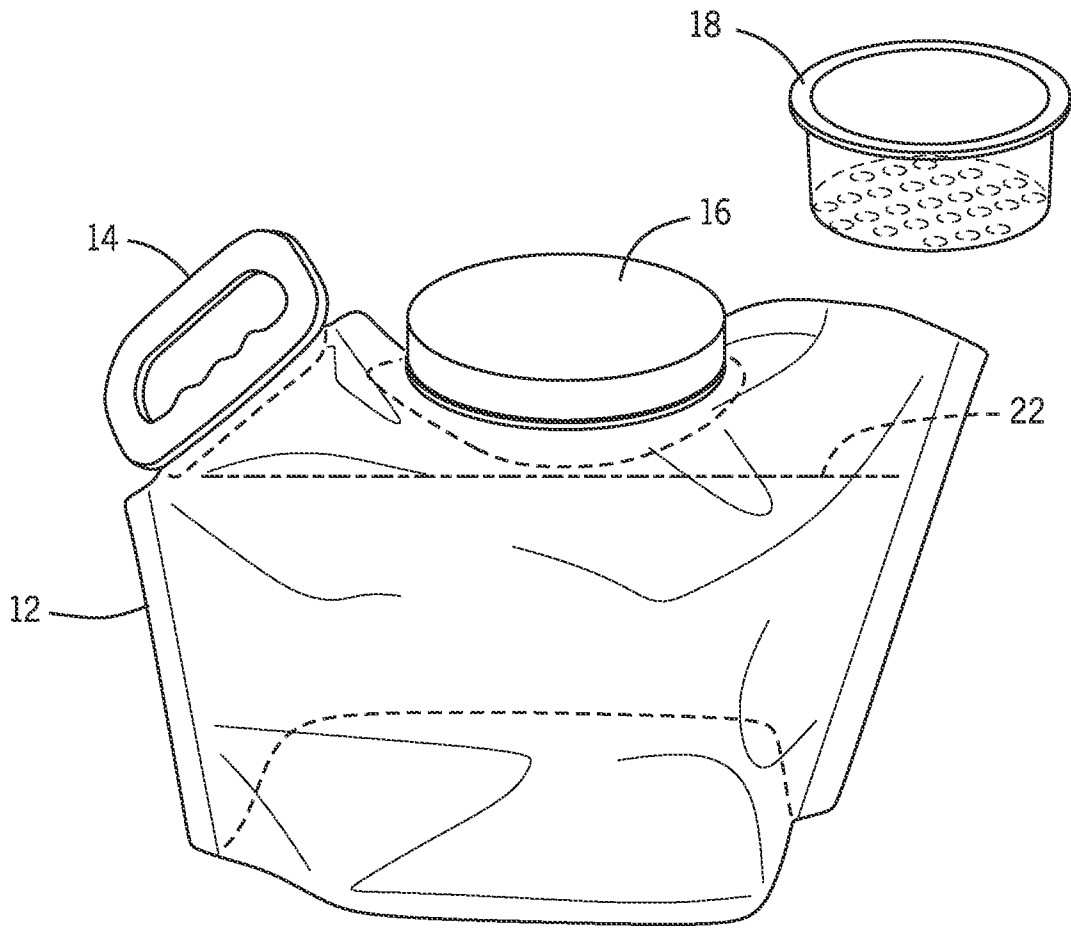
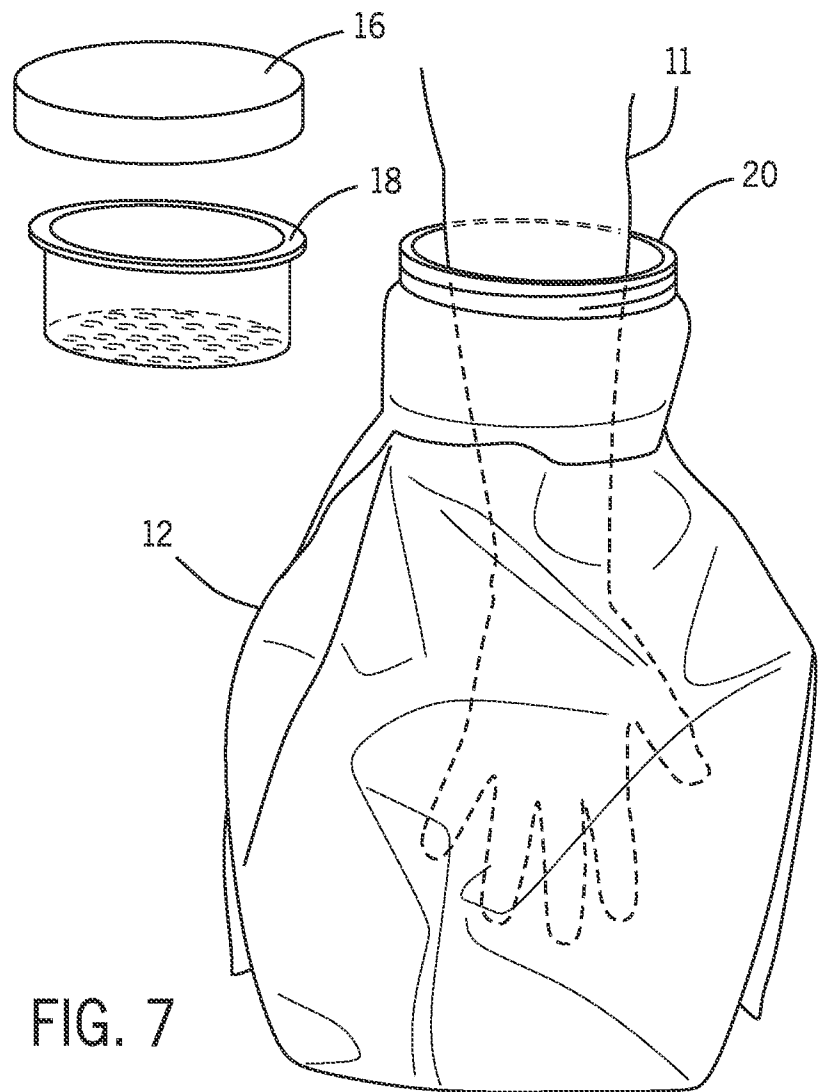
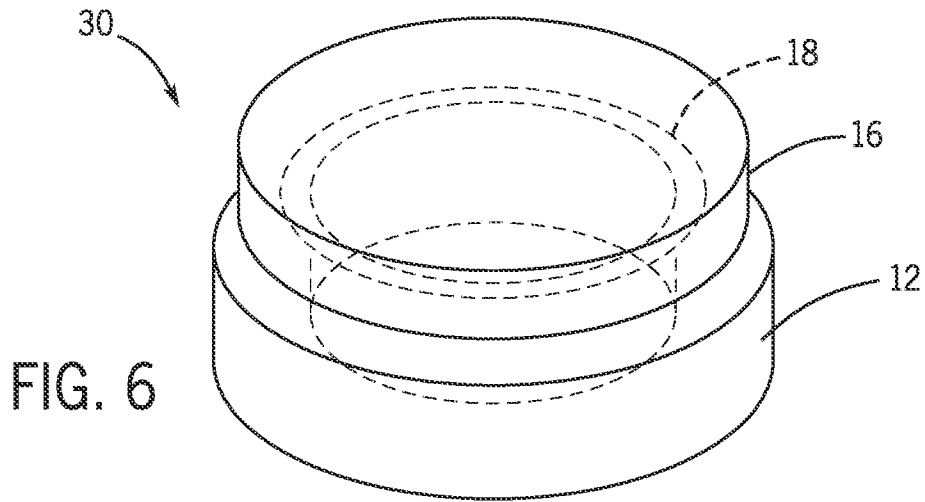


FIG. 5



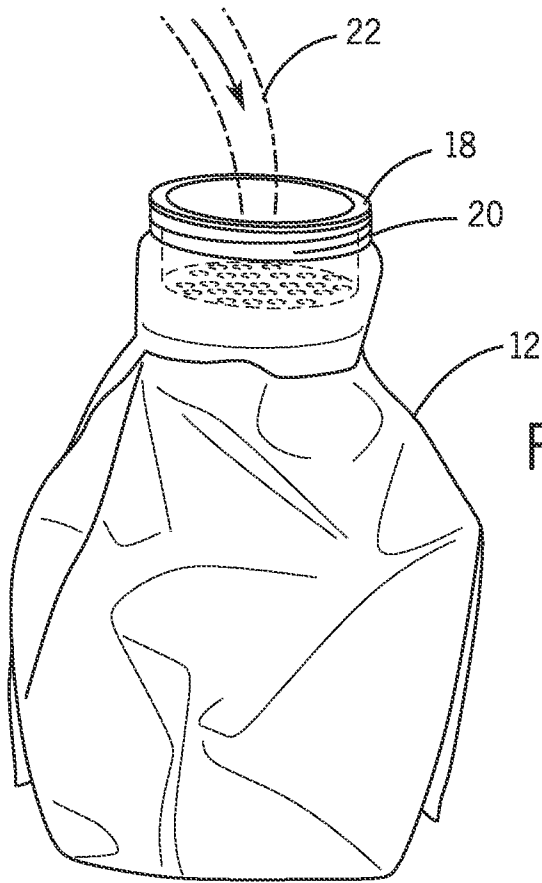


FIG. 8

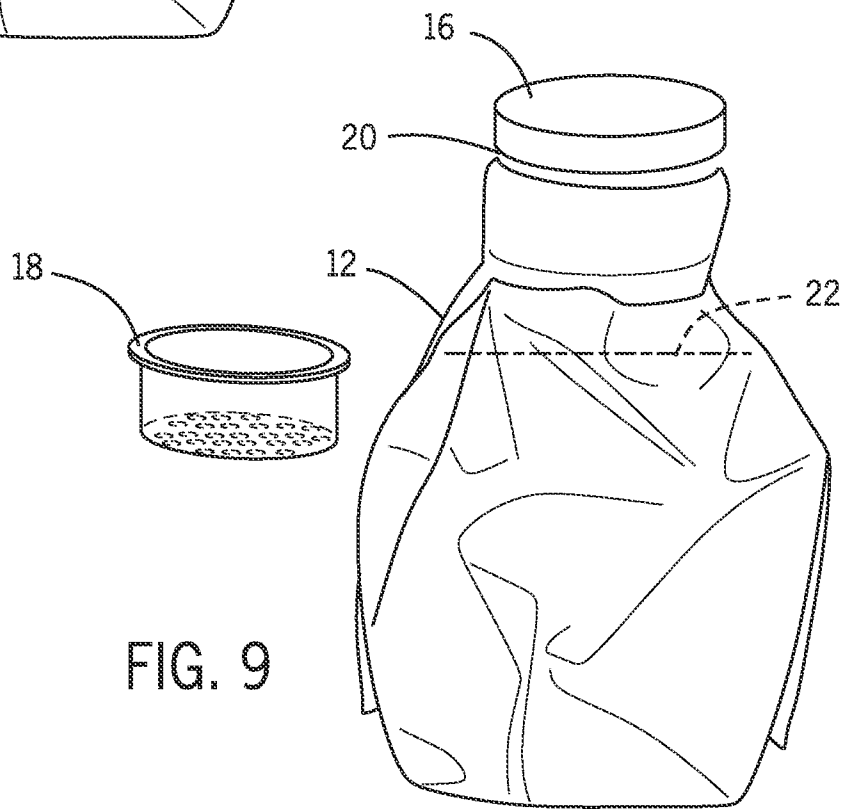


FIG. 9

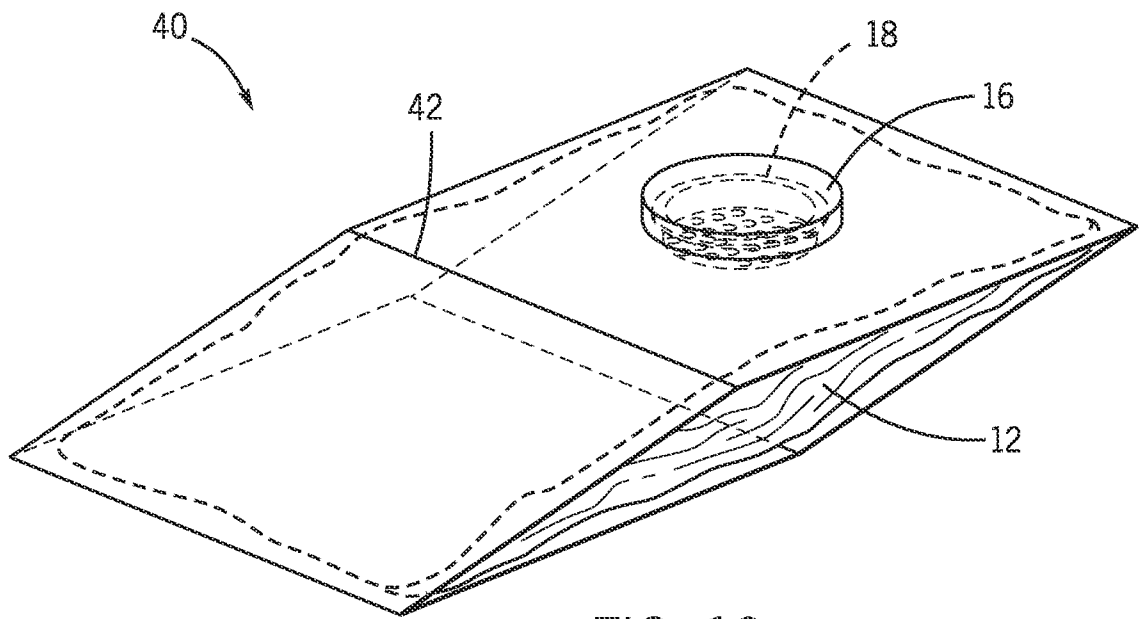


FIG. 10

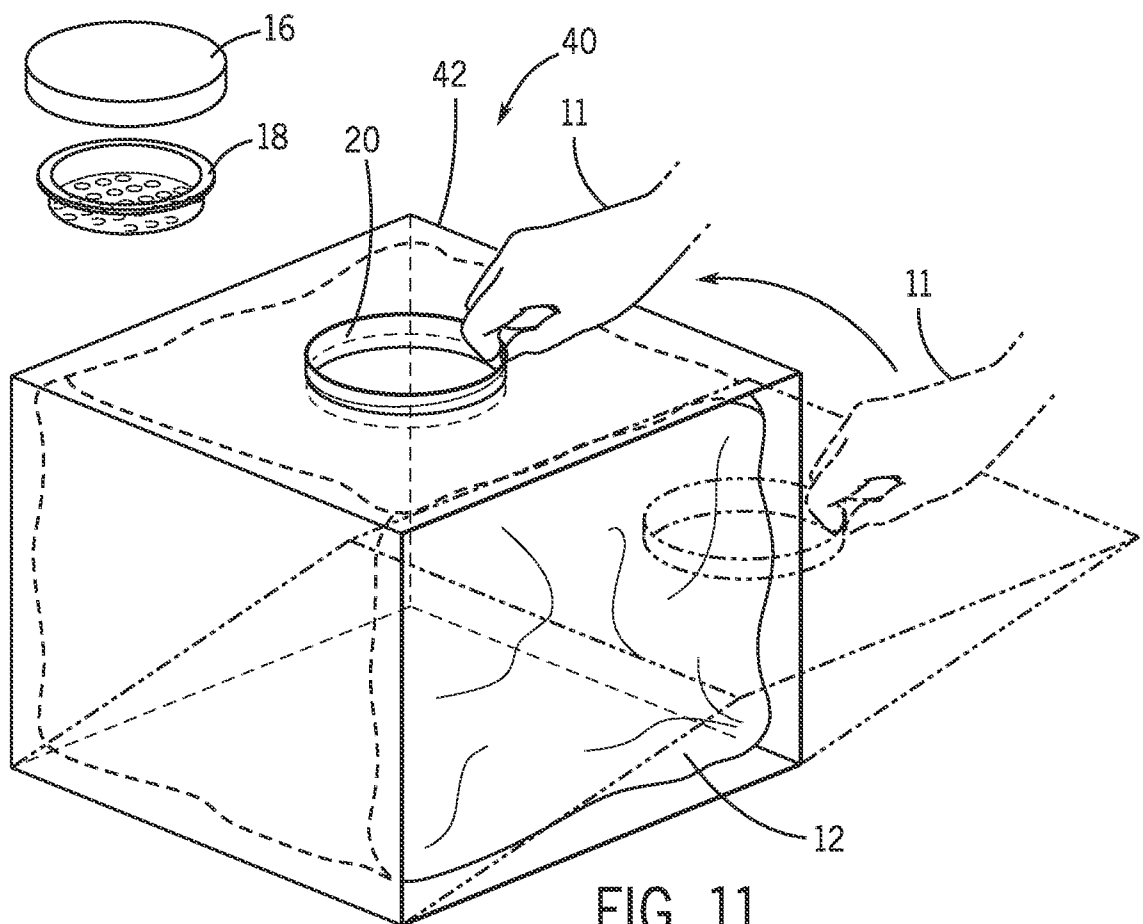


FIG. 11

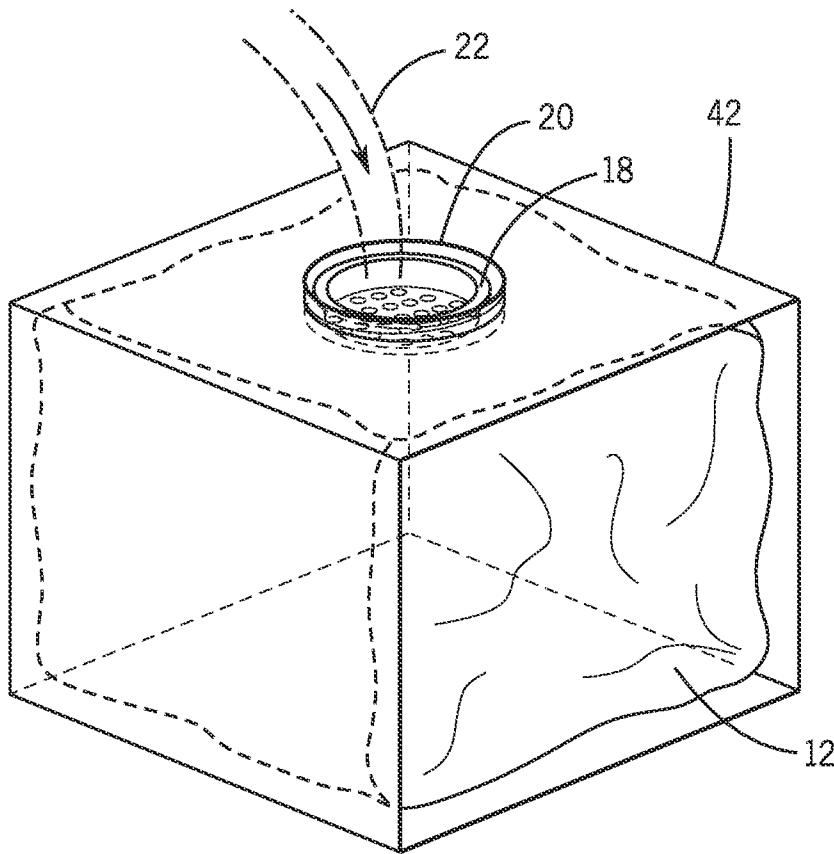


FIG. 12

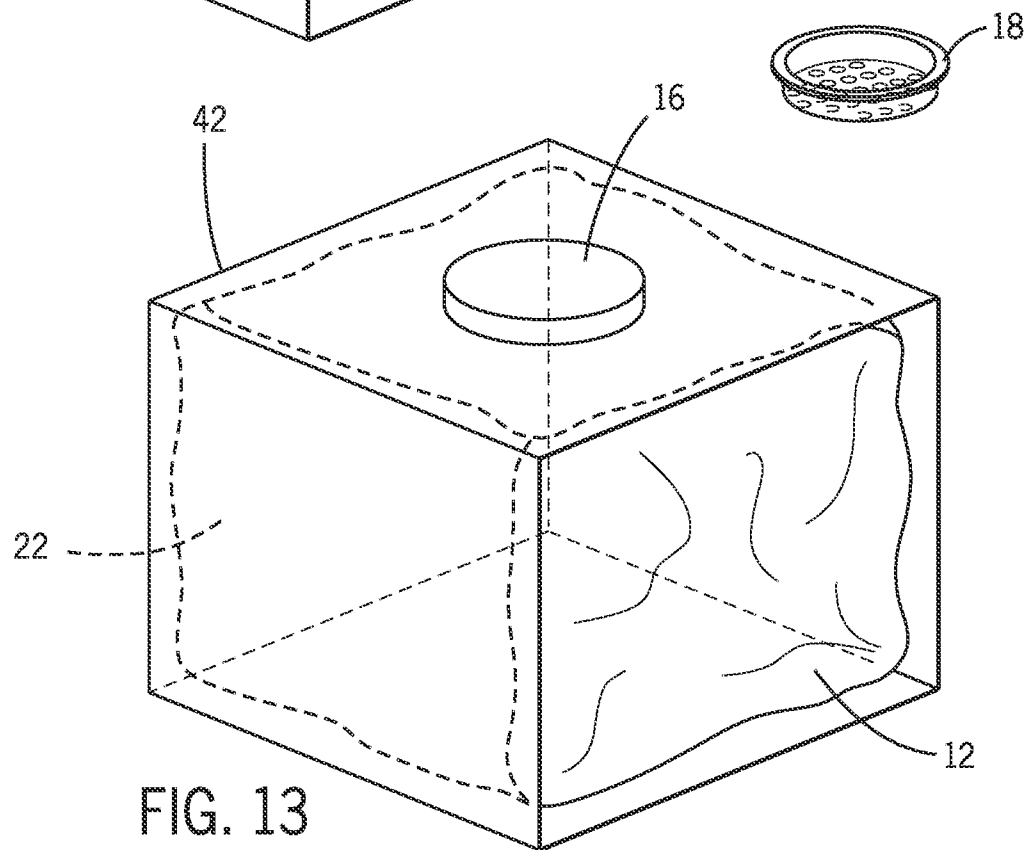


FIG. 13

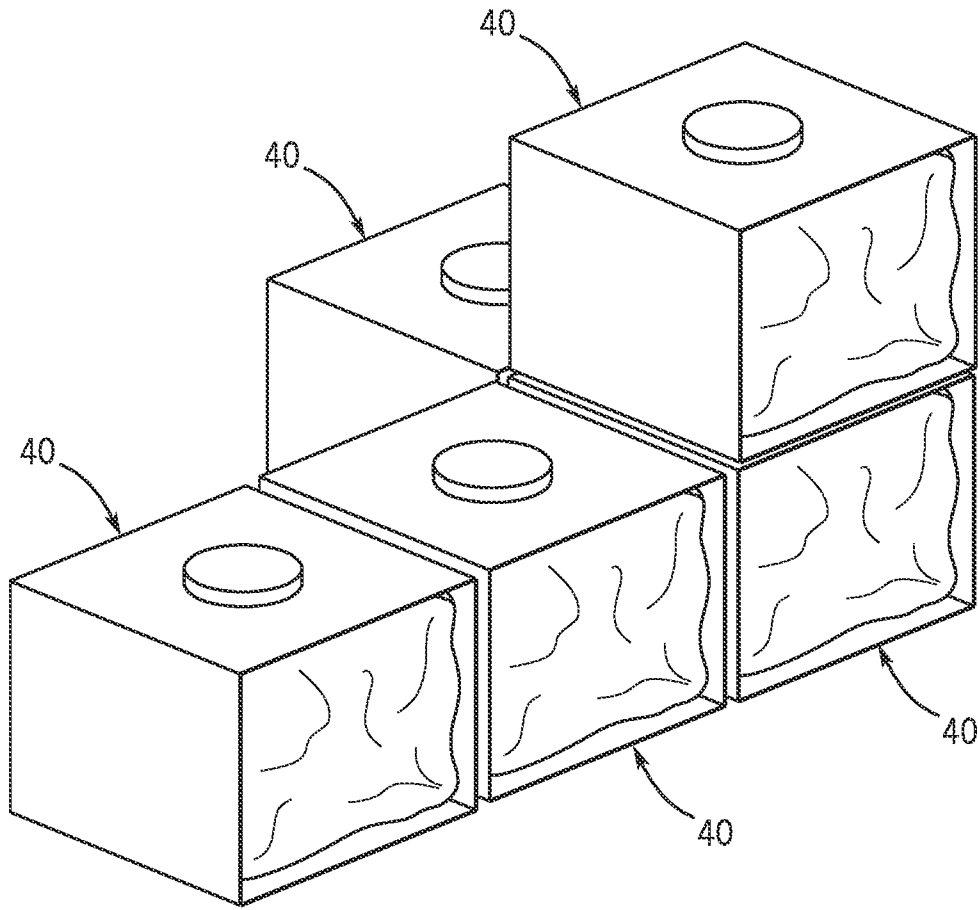


FIG. 14

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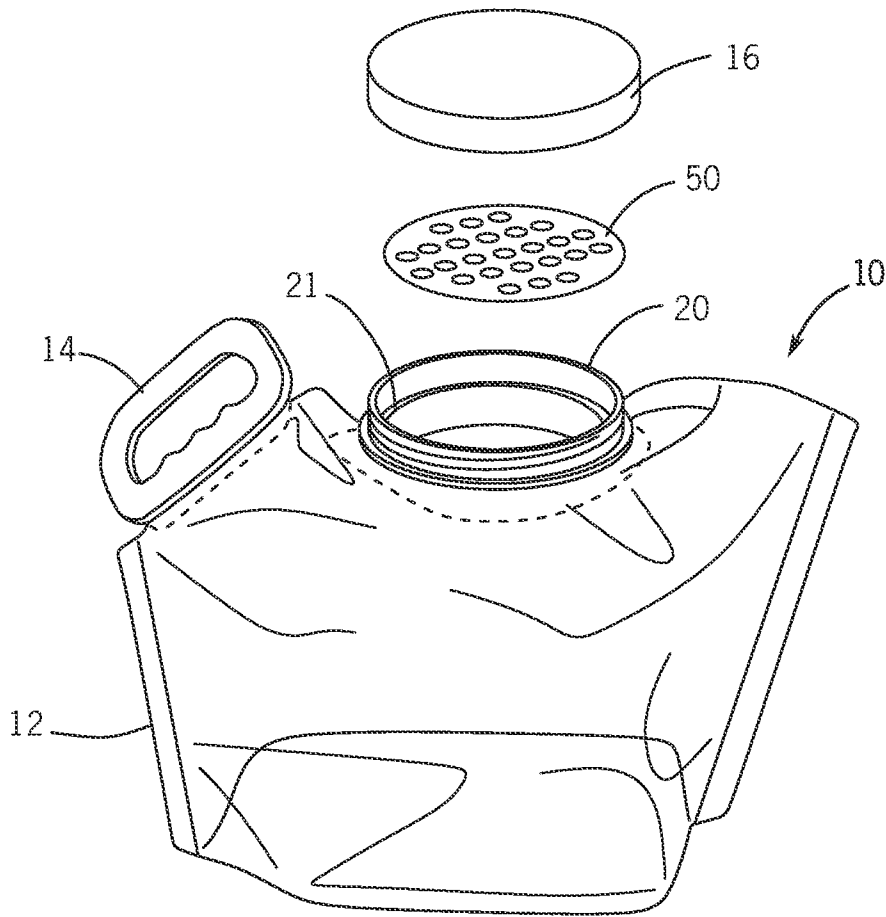


FIG. 15

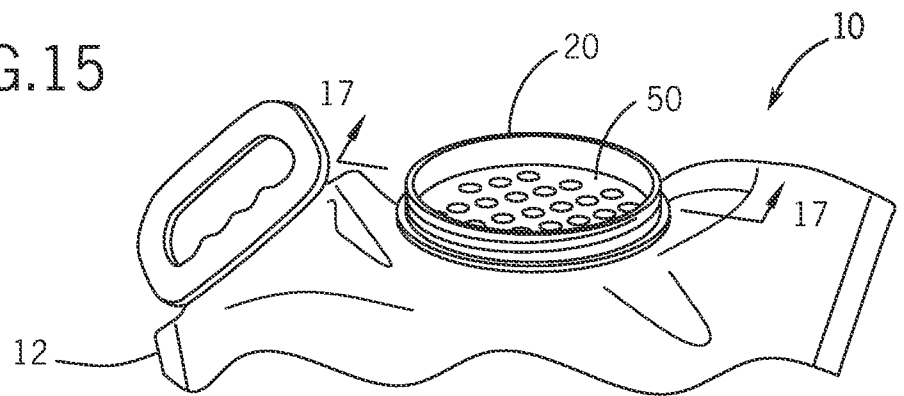


FIG. 16

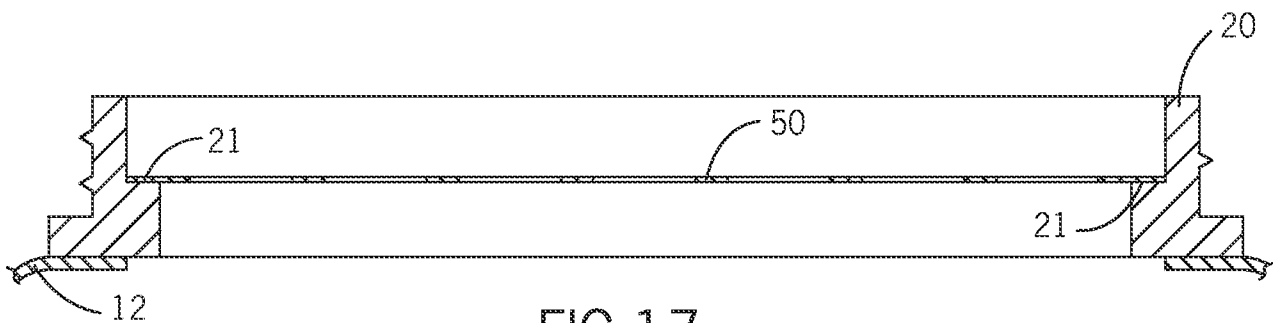


FIG. 17

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US21/70549

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC - F16N 31/00; F01M 11/04; B01D 35/027; B65D 75/58; B65D 33/16; B65D 33/00; B65D 1/02 (2021.01)

CPC - B65D 77/065; B65D 1/0246; B65D 33/00; B65D 33/16; B65D 75/008; B65D 75/5861; B65D 75/5866; B65D 75/5872; B01D 35/027; B65D 77/062; B65D 77/068; F01M 11/0458; F16N 31/00; F16N 31/002; F16N 31/004

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

See Search History document

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

See Search History document

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

See Search History document

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X --- Y	GB 2402924 B (BW TECHNOLOGY LTD) 09 August 2006; figures 1-4; page 3, lines 17-23	1-3, 8 --- 6, 9-11, 13, 14
X --- Y	US 2017/0232369 A1 (JOHNSON & JOHNSON CONSUMER INC.) 17 August 2017; figures 10-12; paragraphs [0028]-[0030], [0047], [0064]-[0067]	1, 4, 5, 7 --- 10, 12
Y	US 5,203,470 A (BROWN MICHAEL T) 20 April 1993; figure 1; column 2, lines 40-55; column 4, lines 20-40	6, 10, 14
Y	GB 2288584 A (CONTINENTAL WINE EXPERTS LTD) 25 October 1995; figure 1; page 4, lines 15-20	9
Y	AU 2006258730 B2 (NISSAN DIESEL MOTOR CO LTD) 03 May 2012; figures 1, 7; page 4, lines 1-10	10-12
Y	US 5,314,088 A (HEUBERGER ERICH) 24 May 1994; figures 1-3; column 5, lines 10-15	10, 13
A	US 3,119,543 A (WALKER JAMES H) 28 January 1964; entire document	1-14
A	US 6,245,228 B1 (KELADA MAHER I) 12 June 2001; entire document	1-14

 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"D" document cited by the applicant in the international application

"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

09 July 2021 (09.07.2021)

Date of mailing of the international search report

SEP 29 2021

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

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Facsimile No. 571-273-8300

Authorized officer

Shane Thomas

Telephone No. PCT Helpdesk: 571-272-4300

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US21/70549

Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:
-***-Please See Supplemental Page-***-

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying additional fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.
3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:
1-14

- Remark on Protest**
- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
 - The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
 - No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

-Continued From Box No. III: Observations where unity of invention is lacking--

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1. In order for all inventions to be examined, the appropriate additional examination fees must be paid.

Group I: Claims 1-14 are directed toward a fluid collection container comprising: a) a rectangular prismatic box.

Group II: Claims 15-16 are directed toward a fluid collection container and a method of draining automotive oil, comprising: ab) removing an oil plug from the oil pan and allowing the oil plug to fall into the strainer.

The inventions listed as Groups I-II do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons:

Group I include a fluid collection container comprising: a) a rectangular prismatic box; b) a collapsible, self-supporting fluid collection bag having a threaded cylindrical spout extending through an aperture in the rectangular prismatic box, which are not present in Group II.

Group II include a fluid collection container and a method of draining automotive oil, comprising: a) positioning a self-supporting, collapsible bag beneath an oil pan of an automobile, said self-supporting, collapsible bag having a threaded inlet with a strainer removably seated therein; b) removing an oil plug from the oil pan and allowing the oil plug to fall into the strainer; c) draining oil through the strainer into the self-supporting, collapsible bag; d) removing an oil filter from the automobile; e) removing the strainer with the oil plug therein from the threaded inlet; f) inserting the oil filter through the threaded inlet; and g) screwing a threaded cap onto the threaded inlet, which are not present in Group I.

The common technical features of Groups I and II are a fluid collection container comprising: a) a self-supporting, collapsible bag with a threaded cylindrical inlet ring; and b) a strainer removably seated within the threaded cylindrical inlet ring, said strainer being operative to separate an object from a viscous liquid.

These common technical features are disclosed by GB 2 402 924 B (BW). BW discloses a fluid collection container (container; figure 1) comprising: a) a self-supporting, collapsible bag (1) with a threaded cylindrical inlet ring (4); and b) a strainer (cap with integrated filters 12; figure 7; page 4, lines 6-10) removably seated within the threaded cylindrical inlet ring (the cap with the integrated filters 12 shown in figure 7 is interchangeable with cap 9 for securing to collar 4 (inlet ring); figures 1, 7; page 4, lines 1-10), said strainer being operative to separate an object from a viscous liquid (the filters 12 removes contaminants from liquid; column 2, lines 15-16).

Since the common technical features are previously disclosed by the BW reference, the common features are not special and so Groups I and II lack unity.