A dual rail shower curtain system supports a shower curtain along a top edge and a bottom edge. The dual rail system of the present invention may be used in, for example, a bath tub or a shower stall. The dual rail system of the present invention may help seal water inside the tub or shower. Moreover, because the shower curtain is fitted to move between the rails, it does not extend into the water, thereby eliminating unsanitary conditions. The dual rail system may be retrofitted to a conventional bath tub or shower stall. Alternatively, the dual rail system may be integrated into a bath tub, wherein the lower rail may fit into a channel formed in the side wall of the bathtub.
DUAL RAIL SYSTEM FOR SHOWERS AND TUBS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to shower curtain holding devices and, more particularly, to a dual rail system for showers and tubs that may be used to secure a shower curtain.

[0002] Conventional shower curtains may be secured along its top edge by, for example, a shower rod. The shower curtain may have its bottom edge hanging from the shower curtain. Some conventional shower curtains may include weights or magnets to help secure a lower edge of the shower curtain.

[0003] With conventional shower curtains, excess water may drip and pool from the shower onto the bathroom floor. In addition, the lower edge of the shower curtain may curl, for example, and hold water, or may dip into water in the bath tub, thereby permitting mold and bacteria growth on the shower curtain.

[0004] As can be seen, there is a need for a shower curtain that may minimize water dripping/ pooling on the bathroom floor as well as unsanitary conditions.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] In one aspect of the present invention, a dual rail shower curtain system comprises an upper rail disposed between walls of a shower enclosure; and a lower rail disposed along a side edge of the shower enclosure, wherein the upper rail and the lower rail are adapted to secure a shower curtain therebetween. In some embodiments, the lower rail may be disposed as an insert in the side wall of a bath tub.

[0006] In another aspect of the present invention, a shower enclosure system comprises a shower curtain; an upper rail, disposed between walls of a shower enclosure, supporting an upper edge of the shower curtain; a lower rail, disposed along a side edge of the shower enclosure, supporting a lower edge of the shower curtain.

[0007] These and other features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following drawings, description and claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a dual rail system used in a bath tub, according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0009] FIG. 2 is an exploded view of the dual rail system of FIG. 1;

[0010] FIG. 3 is a side view of the dual rail system of FIG. 1;

[0011] FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 4-4 of FIG. 3;

[0012] FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 5-5 of FIG. 3;

[0013] FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 6-6 of FIG. 3;

[0014] FIG. 7 is a partially cut-away perspective view of the dual rail system of FIG. 1;

[0015] FIG. 8 is a cross-sectional view of the dual rail system of FIG. 1;

[0016] FIG. 9 is a close-up view of a portion of the dual rail system of FIG. 1;

[0017] FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a dual rail system integrated into a bath tub, according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0018] FIG. 11 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 11-11 of FIG. 10;

[0019] FIG. 12 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 12-12 of FIG. 11; and

[0020] FIG. 13 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 13-13 of FIG. 10.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0021] 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.

[0022] Various inventive features are described below that can each be used independently of one another or in combination with other features.

[0023] Broadly, an embodiment of the present invention provides a dual rail shower curtain system for supporting a shower curtain along a top edge and a bottom edge. The dual rail system of the present invention may be used in, for example, a shower enclosure, such as a bath tub or a shower stall. The dual rail system of the present invention may help seal water inside the tub or shower because the shower curtain is fitted to move between the rails and does not extend into the water, thereby eliminating unsanitary conditions.

[0024] Referring to FIGS. 1 through 9, a first embodiment of a dual rail system 10 may include an upper rail 12 and a lower rail 14. The upper rail 12 may be similar to conventional shower rods. The lower rail 14 may be fitted in a conventional bath tub 22 by known attachment means. For example, the lower rail 14 may have suction cups 16 on each end to attach to the ends of the tub 22. Alternatively, the lower rail 14 may be attached to the tub 22 with dual sided tape, or with a friction fit. The lower rail 14 may be spring loaded, as is known in the shower rod art, to help secure the lower rail 14 to the tub 22. The lower rail 14 may be positioned approximately 3-4 inches along the inside of the tub. The upper and lower rails 12, 14 may be made of light weight materials, such as plastic, aluminum, coated steel and the like.

[0025] A shower curtain 18 may attach to the upper and lower rails 12, 14 with a plurality of hooks 20. The shower curtain 18 includes openings, such as eyelets, not only on a top edge of the shower curtain 18, but also along a bottom edge of the shower curtain 18.

[0026] Referring now to FIGS. 10 through 13, in an alternate embodiment of the present invention, the dual rail system 10 may be integrated into a tub 28 and/or tub surround. An upper rod 24 may be attached similar to a conventional shower rod. In some embodiments, the upper rod 24 may be integrated into a tub surround. A lower rod 26 may be integrated into a channel 30 formed in a side wall of the tub 28. The channel 30 may provide an aesthetically pleasing disposition of the lower rod 26. Typically, the embodiment of FIGS. 10 through 13 may be used for new tub installations.

[0027] The dual rail system 10 of the present invention may provide an alternative to shower doors, which may be difficult to clean and difficult to change styles. By using the dual rail system 10, a user may be able to easily clean the shower curtain and change the curtain to permit various styles. In some embodiments, the upper and lower rails of the dual rail
systems are curved at both ends, thereby helping the curtain to retain water in the tub during use. In some embodiments, the dual rail system 10 may include a pull chain system to help a user open and close the shower curtain. Alternatively, the user may simply open and close the shower curtain by pushing and/or pulling on the shower curtain itself.

[0028] While the above embodiments refer to the dual rail system 10 being used in a tub (e.g., tub 22, 28), the dual rail system 10 may also be used in a shower stall, for example. In this embodiment, a lower rail may be disposed along an edge of an entry step into the shower stall. A shower curtain may then span between the upper rail and the lower rail.

[0029] It should be understood, of course, that the foregoing relates to exemplary 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 dual rail shower curtain system comprising:
   - an upper rail disposed between walls of a shower enclosure; and
   - a lower rail disposed along a side edge of the shower enclosure,

   wherein the upper rail and the lower rail are adapted to secure a shower curtain therebetween.

2. The dual rail shower curtain system of claim 1, wherein the shower enclosure is a bath tub.

3. The dual rail shower curtain system of claim 2, wherein the lower rail is disposed along an upper portion of a side wall of the bath tub.

4. The dual rail shower curtain system of claim 3, wherein the lower rail is integrated into the side wall of the bath tub.

5. The dual rail shower curtain system of claim 3, wherein the lower rail includes an attachment mechanism on each end thereof, the attachment mechanism attaching the lower rail to opposite ends of the bath tub.

6. The dual rail shower curtain system of claim 5, wherein the attachment mechanism includes suction cups.

7. The dual rail shower curtain system of claim 1, wherein the shower enclosure is a shower stall.

8. A shower enclosure system comprising:
   - a shower curtain;
   - an upper rail, disposed between walls of a shower enclosure, supporting an upper edge of the shower curtain;
   - a lower rail, disposed along a side edge of the shower enclosure, supporting a lower edge of the shower curtain.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the shower curtain includes upper and lower eyelets along the upper edge and the lower edge, respectively, of the shower curtain.

10. The system of claim 9, further comprising:
    - upper hooks adapted to attach to the upper eyelets of the shower curtain to the upper rail; and
    - lower hooks adapted to attach to the lower eyelets of the shower curtain to the lower rail.