United States Patent

Daly

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[45] **July 18, 1972**

[54] BASEBOARD MOLDING INCORPORATING COVER SECTIONS FOR CONCEALING ELECTRICAL WALL OUTLET RECEPTACLES

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[21] Appl. No.: **48,276**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **52/716**, 52/288, 52/221, 174/48, 339/23

[51] **Int. Cl.** **E04f 17/08**, E04f 19/04

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 52/287, 288, 220, 221, 717, 52/716; 174/101, 48, 49; 339/23, 44 R, 36

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Primary Examiner—Price C. Faw, Jr.
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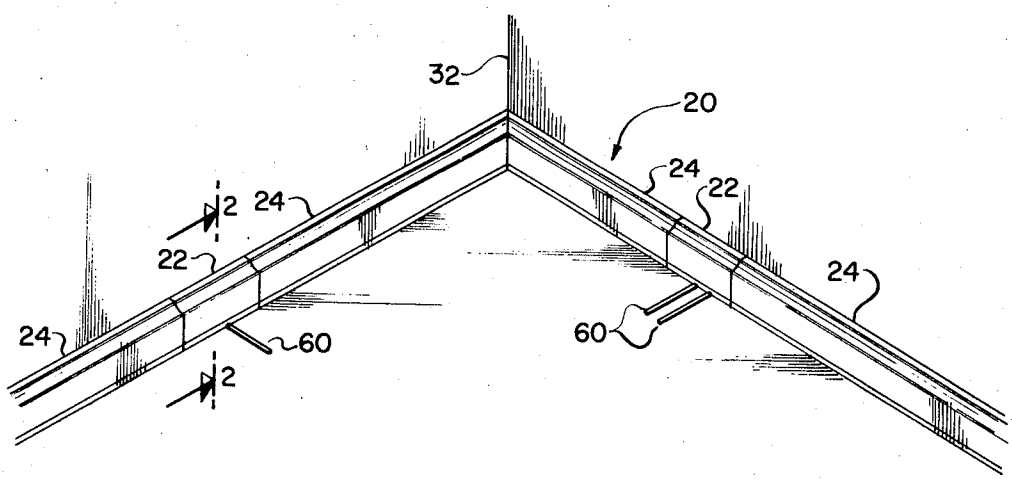
[57] **ABSTRACT**

The disclosure relates to a sectionalized baseboard molding including sections adapted to be placed over and to thereby conceal electrical wall outlet receptacles and corresponding plug connectors. A hollow removable cover section of molding is positioned over the electrical wall outlet receptacle and is pivotally mounted to adjacent fixed sections of molding to permit rotational displacement of the cover section for insertion and withdrawal of a plug connector. The cover section of molding is spring biased to return to its original position adjacent the wall surface and in one embodiment is so retained by a detent locking arrangement. The pivotal mounting is located at the top of the cover section of molding in one embodiment and at the foot of the cover section of molding in the other embodiment. A third embodiment employs hanger rods extending outwardly from adjacent fixed sections of molding. The cover section of molding in this embodiment can be completely removed for permitting insertion or removal of the plug connector into the outlet receptacle and for this purpose has slotted openings which fit over and engage the hanger rods to thereby support the cover section of molding. All the embodiments utilize a layer of foam material affixed to the bottom edge of the molding for allowing passage of the electrical wire conductors thereunder.

8 Claims, 13 Drawing Figures



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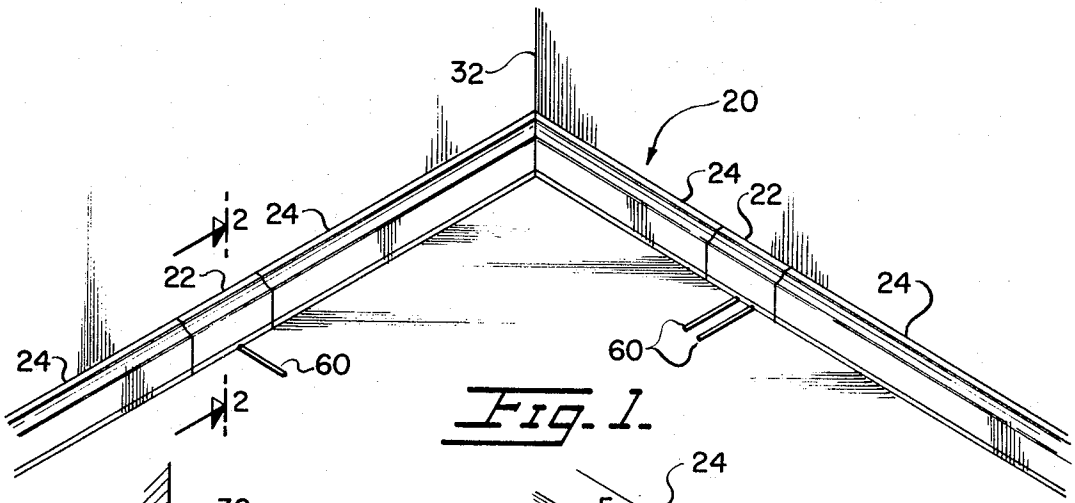
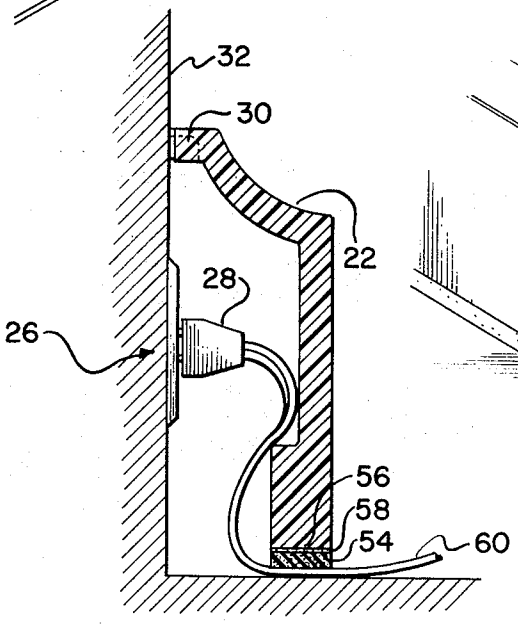


Fig. 1.



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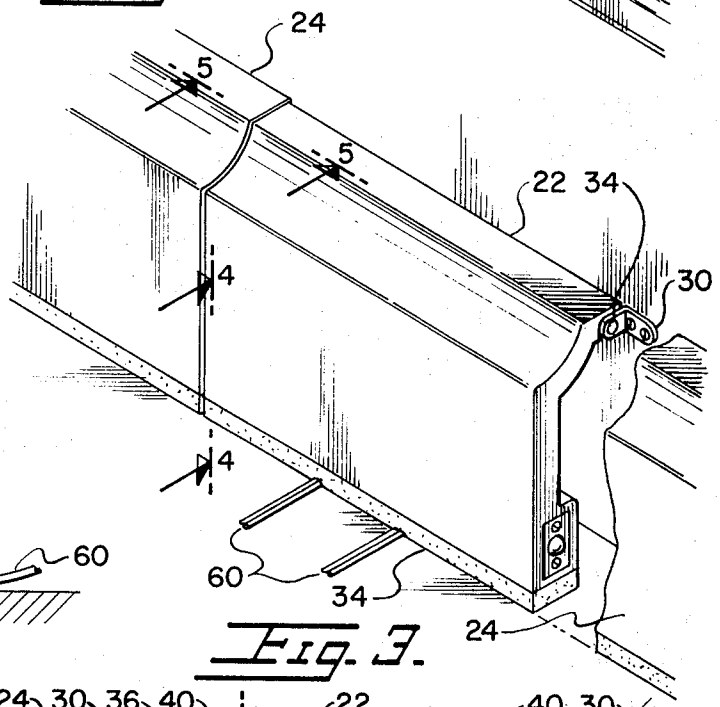
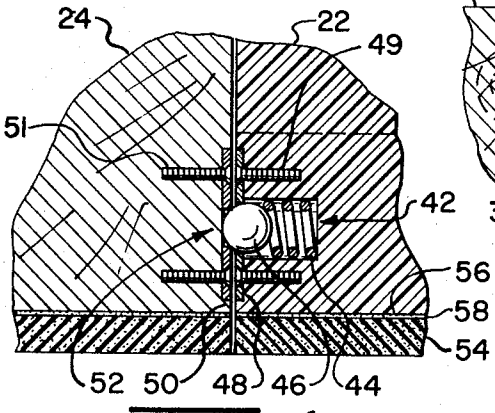


Fig. 3.



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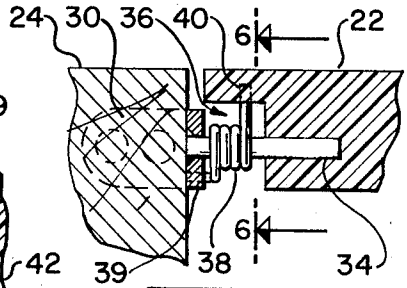

Fig. 5.

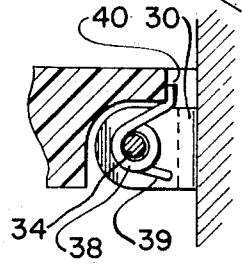

Fig. 6.

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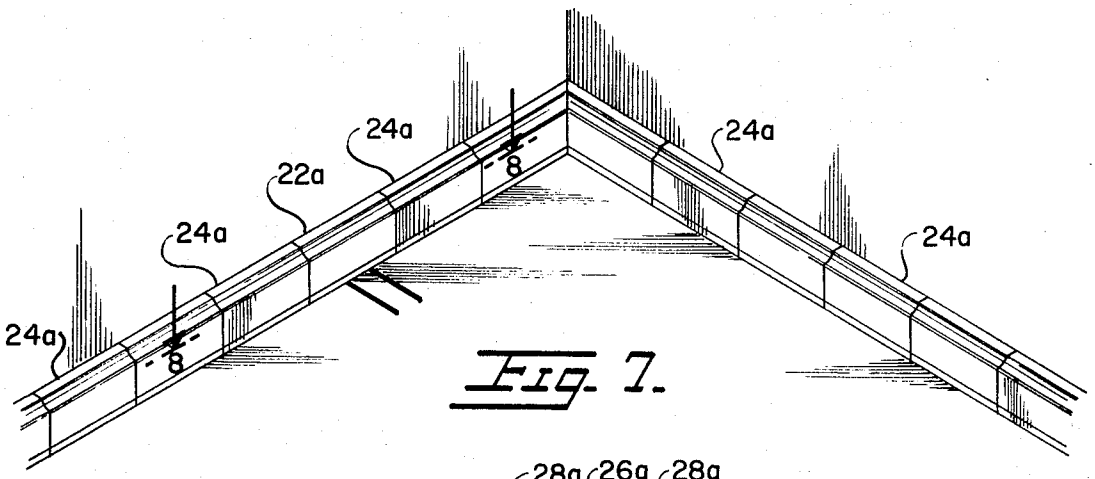
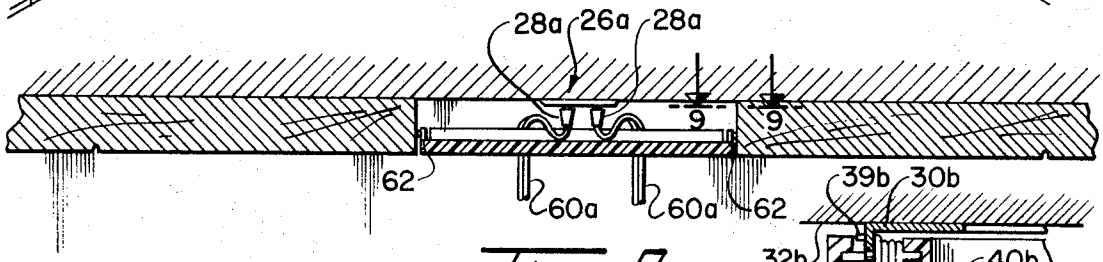


Fig. 7.



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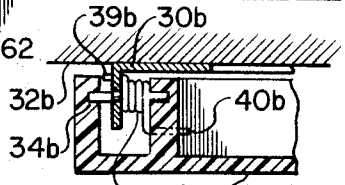

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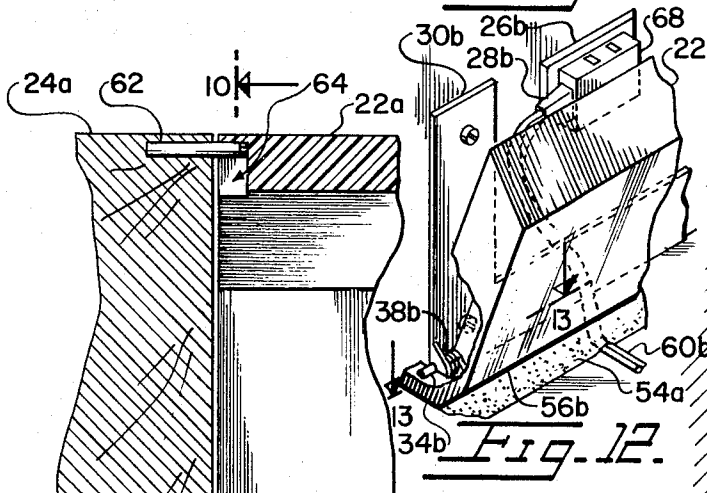

Fig. 12.

Fig. 9.

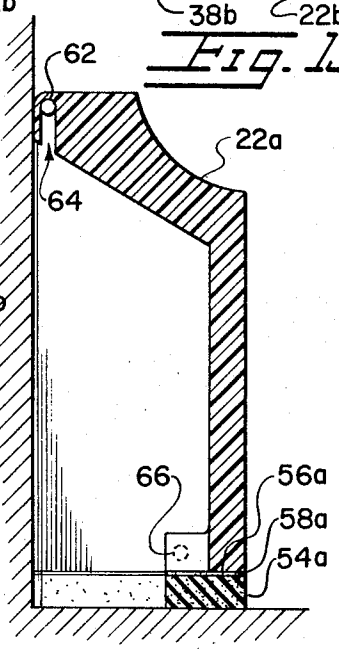

Fig. 10.

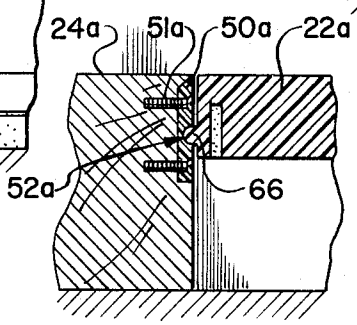

Fig. 11.

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BASEBOARD MOLDING INCORPORATING COVER SECTIONS FOR CONCEALING ELECTRICAL WALL OUTLET RECEPTACLES

This invention relates to molding, more particularly to baseboard molding including sections thereof for placement over and the resultant concealment of electrical wall outlet receptacles and their plug connectors.

The molding of this invention is comprised of sectionalized strips which incorporates a hollow removable cover section for disposition over the electrical wall outlet receptacle. The cover section of molding is further provided with access means to permit plug connectors to be inserted into and withdrawn from the outlet receptacle.

A number of electrical outlet receptacles are frequently installed in each room of a home and they are usually located in the wall surface near the baseboard for the convenient connection of electrical plug connectors affixed to the terminal end of wire conductors extending from household electric appliances, such as vacuum cleaners, floor lamps, television sets, etc. The concealment of these wall receptacles by a continuous strip of baseboard molding is aesthetically desirable because it will cover these unsightly receptacles and attached plug connectors besides providing a continuous molding without convention cutout portions for accommodating the outlet receptacles. Furthermore, the molding of this invention makes the outlet receptacles relatively inaccessible to small children who have a tendency when crawling on the floor to insert their fingers or other objects into the outlets. Additionally, when this molding is used on a terrace or partially weather exposed area, the molding will provide electrical insulation and weather proof protection to the thus concealed outlet receptacles. This molding arrangement and the removable cover sections can also be used in conjunction with baseboard heating or cooling panels, especially for concealing the outlet receptacles.

Although prior art devices have been developed to protect outlet receptacles, especially from unauthorized tampering and removal of the attached electrical appliance from commercial establishments, these devises are not usually incorporated within a continuous strip of molding, and furthermore are not particularly adapted for installation within a home.

The baseboard molding of this invention in contrast is comprised of sectionalized pieces, preferably made form a lightweight electrically insulated thermoplastic which can be molded in a variety of contour designs and suitably colored to conform with the decor of the room. The sections of molding can be easily installed around the wall surface with a minimum of tools and can be readily installed by the average home owner.

A removable cover section is pivotally mounted between adjacent fixed sections of molding by means of a mounting bracket affixed to the wall surface, thus permitting the cover section to be moved from the wall when it is desired to insert or withdraw the plug connector. The cover section additionally contains spring biasing means for returning the cover section of molding to its normal position adjacent the wall surface. Furthermore, detent means cooperating with the adjacent fixed sections of molding will yieldably hold the cover section in the normal position adjacent the wall surface. The bottom edge of the cover section is provided with a compressible foam material for permitting passage thereunder of the electrical wire conductor leading from the plug connector.

In a modified version hanger rods extending from adjacent fixed sections of molding are employed for positioning within a slotted opening formed in the cover section of molding to thus support the cover section. The slotted opening have open ends to permit the cover section to be completely removed from between the adjacent fixed sections, when it is desired to insert or withdraw a plug connector from the outlet receptacle.

It is an object, therefore, of the present invention to provide a baseboard molding of the general character described herein.

Specifically, it is an object of the instant invention to provide a sectionalized baseboard molding having means for concealing electrical wall outlet receptacles and the mating plug connectors.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a baseboard molding incorporating removable cover sections of molding which may be selectively removed to provide access to the electrical outlet receptacles.

Another object of this invention is to provide a baseboard molding wherein the bottom edge of the cover section has means for permitting passage of the electrical conductor wires thereunder.

A still further object of this invention is to provide a baseboard molding for the concealment of electrical wall outlet receptacles and plug connectors which is made of a lightweight electrically insulating thermoplastic material.

The above and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will be apparent in the following description of the preferred embodiments considered in connection with the accompanying drawings.

In the accompanying drawing in which are shown some of the various possible embodiments of the invention:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the baseboard molding of this invention shown affixed to two wall surfaces of a room, each surface containing an electrical wall outlet receptacle covered respectively by two sections of the hollow cover section of molding;

FIG. **2** is an enlarged cross-sectional view taken along line **2—2** of FIG. **1** and shows in detail a cover section of molding disposed over and concealing an electrical outlet receptacle and interconnected plug connector, the wire conductor leading from the plug connector being passed under the bottom edge of the cover section;

FIG. **3** is an enlarged perspective view of the baseboard molding with a section broken away to show the mounting bracket for pivotally mounting the cover section of molding and also shows a detent arrangement for yieldingly securing the molding to the adjacent fixed section;

FIG. **4** is an enlarged partial sectional view taken along line **4—4** of FIG. **3** and shows in detail a ball detent arrangement wherein a spring loaded ball mounted in a recess in the cover section is resiliently urged toward the adjoining fixed sections of molding and is accommodatingly received in a complementary indentation in the adjoining fixed section, thus fixing the relative position of the two sections;

FIG. **5** is an enlarged partial sectional view taken along line **5—5** of FIG. **3** and shows a spring biased pivotal arrangement at one end of the cover section of molding for resiliently urging the molding to assume a position overlying the outlet receptacle and adjacent the wall surface;

FIG. **6** is a partial sectional view taken along line **6—6** of FIG. **5** and shows a helical coil spring mounted around a pivot arm secured to the mounting bracket for resiliently urging the cover section of molding to a downward position overlying the outlet receptacle and adjacent the wall surface;

FIG. **7** is a perspective view of a modified embodiment of the baseboard molding wherein a plurality of equal length modular fixed sections have incorporated there with cover sections;

FIG. **8** is a partial sectional view to an enlarged scale taken along line **8—8** of FIG. **7** showing the cover section concealing an outlet receptacle and two plug connectors placed within the outlet receptacle;

FIG. **9** is a partial sectional view to an enlarged scale taken along line **9—9** of FIG. **8** and shows a hanger rod extending from an adjacent fixed section of molding and engaged by the slotted opening in the cover section, to thereby support the cover section;

FIG. **10** is a cross-sectional view taken along line **10—10** of FIG. **9** and shows the slotted opening in place around the hanger rod and the detent arrangement at the foot of the cover section for releasably securing same to an adjacent fixed section of molding;

FIG. 11 is a partial sectional view to an enlarged scale taken along line 11—11 of FIG. 9 and shows in detail the protuberance from the foot of the cover section for snap fit engagement into a receiving indentation in the adjacent section of molding;

FIG. 12 is an alternate embodiment of the baseboard molding of this invention wherein the molding is pivotally mounted at its foot by means of a mounting plate having a coil spring for resiliently urging the cover section of molding toward the wall surface to thus conceal the outlet receptacle and mating plug connector; and

FIG. 13 is a partial sectional view taken along line 13—13 of FIG. 12 and shows a helical coil spring positioned around a pivot arm affixed to the mounting plate and engaging the cover section of molding for resiliently urging same toward the wall surface to thereby conceal the outlet receptacle.

Referring now in detail to the drawings, the reference numeral 20 denotes generally the sectionalized baseboard molding of this invention. The baseboard molding 20 as seen in FIG. 1 is placed generally along a wall surface 32 of a room at the base of the wall and in order to accommodate an electrical wall outlet receptacle 26, removable cover sections 22 are interposed between fixed sections of molding 24 and disposed so as to cover and conceal the electrical outlet receptacle 26 and a mating male type electrical plug connector 28. The cover sections 22 are positioned by means of mounting bracket 30 comprised of an L-shaped member having one leg thereof affixed to the wall surface 32 by means of screws or other fasteners. The other leg of mounting bracket 30 contains a pivot arm or pin 34 press fit through the leg and journalled in the upper portion or top of cover section 22. The opposite side of cover section 22 adjacent the fixed section of molding 24 contains a similar mounting bracket 30 (not shown). A recess 36 has been provided in the cover section 22 for accommodating a helical coil spring 38 positioned around pin 34 and having one end 39 thereof anchored in bracket 30. The other end 40 of helical coil spring 38 extends into and engages the cover section 22 to resiliently urge same forwardly and toward the wall surface 32 so that it will assume the position as shown in FIGS. 1 – 3. The cover section 22 may be lifted against the force of spring 38 in order to insert or withdraw plug connector 28 and will thereafter return to its position adjacent the wall surface 32. The lower portion of cover section 22 contains a recess 42 for accommodating a coil spring 44 and a ball 46, the ball member 46 being resiliently urged outwardly from said recess 42 by the spring 44. A retaining plate 48 having an aperture therein for accommodating a portion of ball member 46 is securely affixed to the cover section 22 by means of threaded screws 49. The fixed section of molding 24 adjacent cover section 22 has a plate 50 in confronting relationship with the retaining plate 48, and is affixed to the fixed section 24 by means of screws 51 or other fasteners. The plate 50 defines an indentation 52 for accommodatingly receiving a portion of the ball 46 extending through the retaining plate 48 and thus releasably locks the cover section 22 to the fixed section 24. A compressible foam material 54 is affixed to the bottom edge 56 of cover section 22 by means of an adhesive 58 or other suitable fastening arrangement. The foam material 54 is compressible and will accommodatingly permit passage thereunder of an electrical wire conductor 60.

The baseboard molding 20 especially the cover section 22 is preferably made of a synthetic material such as electrically insulated thermoplastic which is molded to the desired shape and contour and may be painted or otherwise colored to conform with the decor of the room. The fixed sections of molding 24 may be made of wood, metal or a synthetic material similar to the cover section 22. The flexible foam material affixed to the bottom edge 56 of cover section 22 is preferably a polyether based thermoplastic or a foam rubber substance.

An alternate embodiment of the baseboard molding of this invention is illustrated in FIG. 7 – 11. In this embodiment a plurality of modular fixed sections of molding 24a and a cover section 22a are interconnected as shown in FIG. 7 and will thereby conceal an electrical wall outlet receptacle 26a and male type electrical plug connectors 28a. The fixed sections 24a adjacent the cover section 22a contain projecting hanger rods 62 which are adapted to extend outwardly and be accommodatingly received in a slotted opening 64 formed in the cover section 22a. The lower portion of the cover section 22 contains a protuberance 66 and the adjacent fixed section 24 contains a confronting plate 50a affixed thereto by means of screws 51a and having indentation 52a for accommodatingly receiving the protuberance 66 to thus releasably secure the cover section 22a and the fixed section 24a. A foam material 54a is affixed to the bottom edge 56a of section 22a by means of adhesive 58a. The foam material 54a is compressibly displaced to accommodate the wire conductors 60a. The cover 22a may be completely removed from between fixed sections 24a, as when inserting or withdrawing plug connector 28a, and it can be easily replaced by engaging rods 62 within slotted openings 64.

A further embodiment of the baseboard molding of this invention is shown in FIGS. 12 and 13 wherein a mounting bracket 30b is secured to the wall surface 32b surrounding an electrical wall outlet receptacle 26b. As shown in FIG. 12, the receptacle 26b may accommodate an adapter 68 for receiving a plurality of male type electrical plug connectors 28b. The cover section 22b is pivotally mounted at its lower or bottom edge 56a by means of pivotal arm or pin 34b press fit through the mounting bracket 30b and journalled within the cover section 22b. A helical coil spring 38b is positioned around 34b and has one spring end 39 affixed to the bracket 30b, and other spring end 40b, engages a portion of the cover section 22b to resiliently urge same against the wall surface 32b to fully conceal the outlet receptacle 26b. A foam material 54b may be adhesively affixed to the bottom edge 56b of cover section 22b in a manner and for a similar purpose as shown and described with reference to the other embodiments. The cover 22b can be urged away from the wall surface 32b (as shown in FIG. 12) against the biasing force of spring 38b to provide access to outlet receptacle 26b and will return to a position adjacent the wall surface 32b when the urging force is removed.

The above cited embodiments are intended as exemplary and while they have described the invention with specific implementation thereof, other modifications and various changes might be made in the embodiments as so set forth and will be apparent to those skilled in the art.

It should, therefore, be understood that all material herein described or shown in the accompanying drawings are to be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

What is claimed is:

1. A baseboard molding for concealing an electrical wall outlet receptacle comprising a plurality of fixed sections of molding affixed to a wall surface on either side of a wall outlet receptacle, a removable cover section of molding disposed over and concealing the electrical wall outlet receptacle, and means for mounting the cover section between adjacent fixed sections of molding to permit selective movement of the cover section and access to all outlet receptacle, biasing means for yieldably retaining the cover section in a position overlying the outlet receptacle, said means for mounting the cover section includes a bracket affixed to the wall surface and a pivot arm extending from the bracket and journalled in the cover section.

2. A baseboard molding as claimed in claim 1 wherein a helical coil spring is accommodated around the pivot arm, said spring having an end engaging the cover member to resiliently urge same toward the wall surface.

3. A baseboard molding as claimed in claim 2 further including means for securing the cover section to adjacent fixed sections, said means comprising a recess in the cover section, a ball member mounted within the recess, a coil spring mounted within the recess for urging the ball member outwardly, and a retaining plate affixed to the cover section and disposed over the recess, said retaining plate defining an aper-

ture therein for permitting a portion of the ball to extend therethrough for engagement with the adjacent fixed section.

4. A baseboard molding as claimed in claim 3 wherein an additional plate is affixed to the fixed section in confronting relationship with said retaining plate, said additional plate defining an indentation therein aligned with the projecting ball member and adapted to accommodatingly receive said ball projection to interlock the cover section and fixed section.

5. A baseboard molding as claimed in claim 4 including a layer of flexible foam material affixed to the bottom edge of the cover section for accommodating passage of a electrical wire conductor therethrough.

6. A baseboard molding as claimed in claim 1 wherein the means for mounting the cover section includes a hanger rod extending from the fixed section and a slotted opening defined in the cover section for accommodatingly receiving said rod.

7. A baseboard molding as claimed in claim 6 further including means for securing the cover section to adjacent fixed sections, said means comprising a protuberance on said cover member projecting outwardly and yieldably engaging an adjacent fixed section of molding.

8. A baseboard molding as claimed in claim 7 wherein the fixed section contains a plate in confronting relationship with the said protuberance, said plate having an indentation for accommodatingly receiving said protuberance to interlock the cover section and fixed section.

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