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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication****Bell et al.**(10) **Pub. No.: US 2008/0169736 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jul. 17, 2008**(54) **SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR INSTALLING
COUNTERTOPS****Related U.S. Application Data**

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Ryszard Konarski, Middleton, MA (US)**Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47B 96/18 (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.** **312/140.3**(57) **ABSTRACT**

Countertop assemblies, kits for countertop assemblies, and methods of assembly of countertops including a substrate, a surface material, and an edge profile element removably attached to the lower surface of the substrate, the edge profile element including a first leg portion configured to be secured to the lower surface of the substrate and a second leg portion, extending from the first leg portion, configured to substantially overlay the at least one edge surface of the substrate and the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material.

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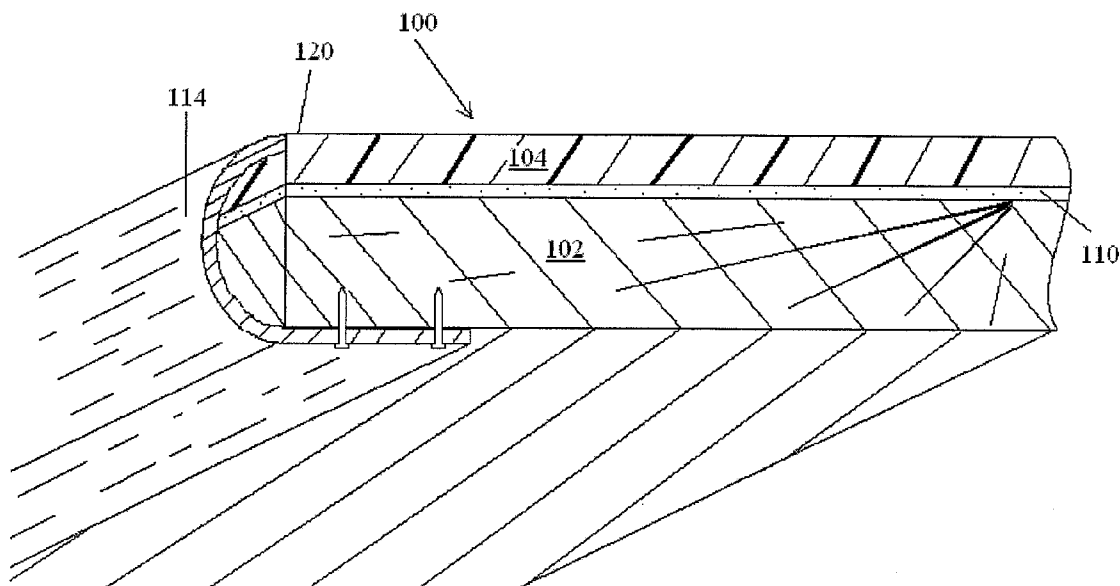
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FIG. 2

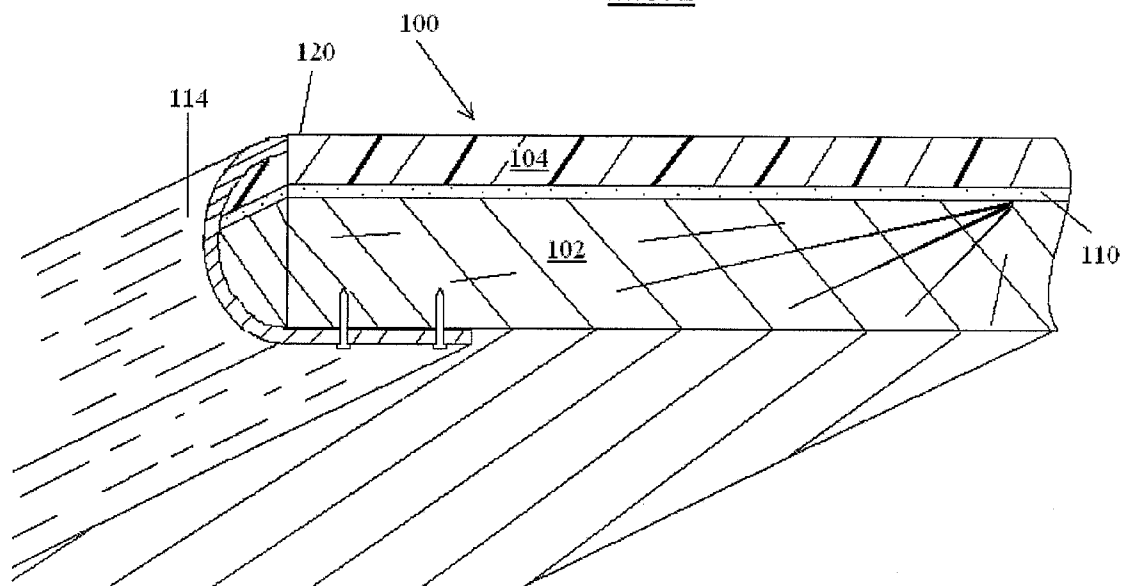


FIG.3

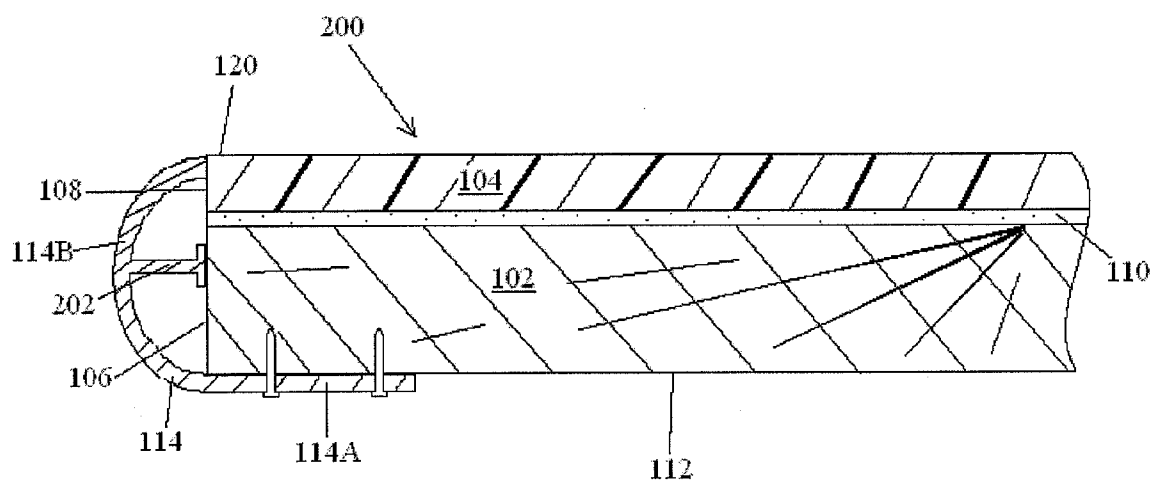
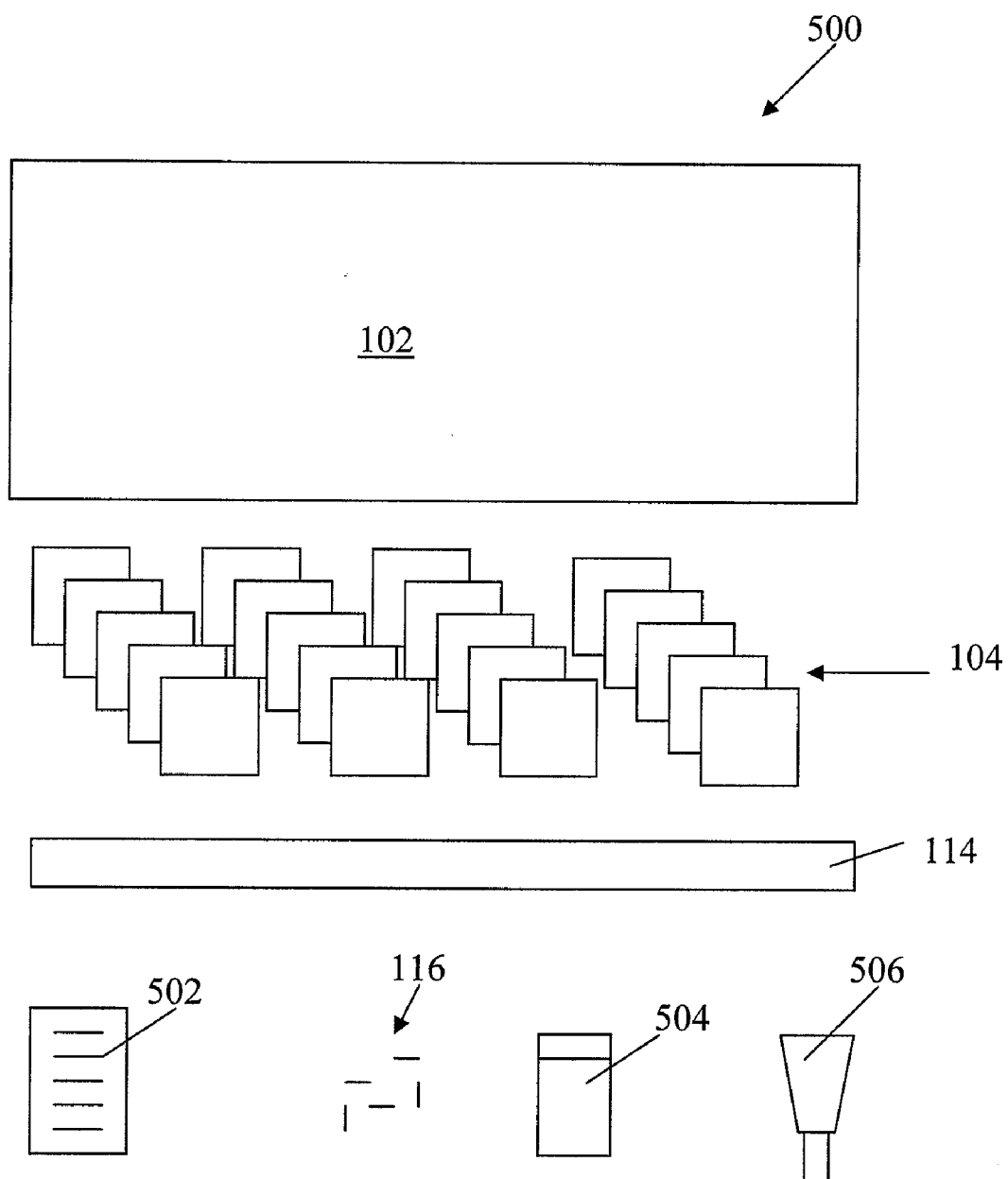


FIG. 5



SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR INSTALLING COUNTERTOPS

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) to U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/880,690, entitled "SYSTEM FOR INSTALLING COUNTERTOPS," filed on Jan. 16, 2007, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of Invention

[0003] The present disclosure is directed to countertop assemblies, kits for countertop assemblies, countertop edge profile strips, and methods of assembling or finishing countertop assemblies.

[0004] 2. Discussion of Related Art

[0005] Granite and marble kitchen countertops are a popular consumer choice, attractive because of their elegant finish, great variety of natural colors and patterns, and durability. Stone countertops are typically available in two basic configurations: as a single $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick stone slab cut to a specified length with a cutout for the sink and a milled edge, generally curved; and as $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick stone tiles mounted on plywood, usually fabricated on location.

[0006] Stone slabs must be custom cut to exact measurements provided to a stone fabricator and then shipped, usually for a considerable distance and at substantial expense, to the installation location. Because of the excessive weight of the stone, typically requiring several workers for transport and installation, and vulnerability to damage, slabs are invariably at the high end of countertop costs. The timeline for slab installation from design to completion often takes months.

[0007] Stone tiles, usually 12" square, are, by comparison to stone slabs, easy to purchase, handle, and install. Stone tiles can be precisely cut to any size and quickly installed in a bed of grout over plywood by a carpenter on location. The savings afforded by using stone tiles over the cost of a slab is substantial, with tile installation costing a fraction of that of slabs. Although not seamless like a slab, tile joints can be minimized in appearance by using a grout color compatible with the tile. The principal and persistent disadvantage of countertops constructed using stone tile has been the unattractive appearance of the facing edge. Whereas the edge of a slab is contiguous to the surface and can be milled by the supplier into a variety of finished profiles, the installer of tiles is faced with somehow covering up the exposed "sandwich" of stone, grout (or an appropriate adhesive), and plywood backing. Solutions may include strips of finished wood or Formica (requiring frequent maintenance and repair), and specially ordered stone facings that must match the tile (expensive, time-consuming and still with an exposed joint). Metal extrusions that cover the exposed edge are not commonly available commercially, and those that are generally have two vertical sections that cannot be removed once installed. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 6,135,581 to Denis Kopp et al. describes a countertop assembly kit including an edge profile strip that may be permanently attached to the edge of a countertop by

way of a projecting tongue inserted and sealed into a groove formed in the edge of the countertop.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0008] Embodiments of the disclosure described herein include countertops, countertop assemblies, kits for the construction or finishing of countertops, and methods of constructing or finishing countertops.

[0009] Countertops according to some embodiments may include a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface and a countertop surface material having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface. The countertop surface material may be disposed on and substantially coextensively overlay the upper surface of the substrate such that the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material is substantially aligned with the at least one edge surface of the substrate. An edge profile element may be removably attached to the lower surface of the substrate. The edge profile element may include a first leg portion configured to be secured to the lower surface of the substrate and a second leg portion, extending from the first leg portion, configured to substantially overlay the at least one edge surface of the substrate and the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material. At least one edge surface of the countertop surface material may be substantially co-planar with the at least one edge surface of the substrate. The second leg portion of the edge profile element may include an upper edge configured to engage the countertop surface material along the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material and proximate to the upper surface of the countertop surface material, substantially along an entire length of the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material.

[0010] In some embodiments, the second leg portion of the edge profile element is configured with a body portion that is spaced away from the at least one edge surface of the substrate, and in certain embodiments the edge profile element may include at least one spacer element disposed in the space defined by the body portion of the second leg of the edge profile element. The edge profile element may be secured to the lower surface of the substrate with a fastener.

[0011] The edge profile element may be fabricated from metal, may comprise a continuous metal band, and may include at least one of mitered edges and die cut edges. The edge profile element may further comprise an outer layer including at least one of a powder coating, a paint coating, and an electroplated coating. In some embodiments, the second leg portion of the edge profile element may include an upper edge configured to apply a pressure against at least a portion of the countertop surface material along the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material. The edge profile element may be configured to engage another edge profile element at adjacent lengthwise ends.

[0012] In some embodiments, the edge profile element may include a recess, adapted and configured to accommodate an edge banding mounted therein. The edge banding may be fabricated from at least one of tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, and plastic. The countertop may include at least one fastener configured to secure the edge profile element to the substrate at least one position along the at least one edge surface of the substrate.

[0013] The countertop surface material may be fabricated from at least one of tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, and plastic and the substrate may comprise plywood.

[0014] Some embodiments of the present disclosure comprise countertop edging kits. Some embodiments of a countertop edging kit according to the present disclosure may include a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface, a countertop surface material having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface, the countertop surface material being adapted and configured to be disposed on and substantially coextensively overlay the upper surface of the substrate such that the at least one edge of the countertop surface material is substantially aligned with the at least one edge surface of the substrate, and an edge profile element including a first leg portion configured to be secured to the lower surface of the substrate and a second leg portion, extending from the first leg portion, configured to substantially overlay the at least one edge surface of the substrate and the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material.

[0015] In some embodiments of the countertop edging kit, the substrate may comprise plywood. In some embodiments, the plywood may have a thickness of about 0.75 inches.

[0016] In some embodiments of the countertop edging kit, the countertop surface material may be fabricated from at least one of tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, and plastic.

[0017] The countertop edging kit according to some embodiments may further comprise instructions for assembling the kit and may include additional items, for example, an adhesive material.

[0018] The countertop edging kit may comprise an edge profile element including a first leg portion configured to be secured to a lower surface of a substrate and a second leg portion, extending from the first leg portion, configured to substantially overlay at least one edge surface of the substrate and instructions for mounting the edge profile element onto a countertop assembly, and may further comprise fasteners.

[0019] Also encompassed by the present disclosure is a method of constructing a countertop. This method may comprise providing a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface, disposing a countertop surface material having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface on the upper surface of the substrate, the countertop surface material substantially coextensively overlaying the substrate and such that at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material is substantially aligned with the at least one edge surface of the substrate, and securing an edge profile element to the lower surface of the substrate. The step of securing the edge profile element to the lower surface of the substrate may include using fasteners capable of being removed from the substrate.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0020] The accompanying drawings are not intended to be drawn to scale. In the drawings, each identical or nearly identical component that is illustrated in various figures is represented by a like numeral. For purposes of clarity, not every component may be labeled in every drawing. In the drawings:

[0021] FIG. 1 is a cross-sectional view of an embodiment of the disclosure;

[0022] FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional perspective view from beneath and to the left of the embodiment according to FIG. 1;

[0023] FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view of an alternate embodiment of the disclosure;

[0024] FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view of a further alternate embodiment of the disclosure; and

[0025] FIG. 5 is an illustration of the contents of a kit for assembling a countertop according to an embodiment of the disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0026] This invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and the arrangement of components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or of being carried out in various ways. Also, the phraseology and terminology used herein is for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting. The use of “including,” “comprising,” or “having,” “containing,” “involving,” and variations thereof herein, is meant to encompass the items listed thereafter and equivalents thereof as well as additional items.

[0027] The present disclosure is directed to countertop assemblies, kits for countertop assemblies, countertop edge profile elements or strips, and methods of assembling or finishing countertop assemblies.

[0028] One embodiment of the present disclosure may comprise stone tile adhered onto a backing of plywood, to which an extruded metal edge profile element, which can be cut in lengths by an installer, may be attached with screws to the underside of an outer edge of the plywood. The metal edge profile element may be a continuous and removable metal band which completely conceals the facing edge of the stone, grout or adhesive, and plywood. This edge profile element can be made in a variety of profiles and finishes, and may be readily replaced because it may be attached to the plywood on its underside by removable screws or other suitable fasteners. The edge profile element band may be made of stainless steel, aluminum, chrome, etc., in a variety of finishes, such as polished stainless, burnished nickel, antique copper, or other metallic or non-metallic finishes.

[0029] FIG. 1 illustrates one embodiment of a countertop assembly, generally indicated as **100**, according to the present disclosure. For clarity, in this figure as well as in all others, only a part of a top portion proximate to an edge of the countertop is illustrated. Also not shown are any tile joints, which may be present in some embodiments, and may vary in location based upon the size of the tile that may be utilized. The countertop assembly **100** includes a substrate **102** and a countertop surface material **104**, which substantially and coextensively overlays the substrate, positioned so that the edge **106** of the substrate **102** and the edge **108** of the countertop surface material **104** are aligned, co-planar to one another. The countertop surface material **104** is held in place on the substrate with a layer of grout or adhesive **110**. Grout **110** may comprise any type of grout, adhesive, or mastic cementing material capable of securing or otherwise adhering the countertop surface material **104** in place on the substrate **102**. Removably attached to a bottom surface **112** of the substrate **102** is an edge profile element **114**, which is connected to the substrate **102** by one or more fasteners **116** that pass through holes **118** provided in a substantially planar first leg portion **114A** of the edge profile element **114** and into the substrate **102**. The edge profile element **114** includes a rounded second leg portion **114B** extending upward from the first leg portion **114A** as shown in FIG. 1. The second leg portion **114B** makes contact at its upper edge with the countertop surface material **104** along edge **108** of the countertop

surface material **104** proximate to the upper surface **120** of the countertop surface material **104**. The edge of the second leg portion **114B** of the edge profile element **114** may in some cases be arranged or pre-stressed prior to assembly to apply pressure against the countertop surface material **104** so as to prevent particles or fluid from migrating between the edge profile element **114** and the remainder of the countertop. In the embodiment of FIG. 1, the second leg portion **114B** of the edge profile element **114** defines a curved body portion spaced away from the edges of the substrate **102** and the countertop surface material **104** between the points of contact of the edge profile element **114** along the bottom surface of the substrate **102** and the edge of the countertop surface material **104**. The materials from which the various elements illustrated in FIG. 1 may be formed are described further below.

[0030] FIG. 2 illustrates the embodiment of the countertop shown in FIG. 1 from a view slightly below and to the left of the edge of the countertop. It can be seen that the edge profile element **114** may comprise a continuous band that may extend substantially along the entire length of an edge of a countertop and hide the “sandwich” of substrate, grouting, and surface material along the edge of the countertop from view. Although not shown, the lengthwise edge or edges of the countertop edge profile element **114** may be mitered or die cut. The lengthwise edge may be shaped to form a seamless joint with a second edge profile where it is desired that two edge profiles engage one another, for example, at a corner of a countertop. In some embodiments, inside and outside corners of the edge profile element may be factory precision cut, mitered and beveled as necessary, to achieve a precise fit, or may be shaped as necessary on site, using the proper equipment.

[0031] FIG. 3 illustrates a second embodiment of a countertop assembly, generally indicated at **200**, according to the present disclosure. Since countertop assembly **200** is substantially similar to countertop assembly **100**, like parts are identified by the same reference numbers. In this embodiment, the edge profile element **114** includes a spacer element **202** disposed in the space defined by the curved body portion of the second leg element **114B** of the edge profile element **114**. This spacer element **202** may project toward the edge surfaces **106**, **108** of the substrate and the countertop surface material. In some embodiments, the spacer element may contact the edge surfaces **106**, **108** of the substrate and the countertop surface material, either together or at only one of the edges, e.g., edge **106** as shown in FIG. 2, and thus increase the rigidity of the edge profile element **114** and safeguard it from being pushed in against the substrate **102** or countertop surface material **104**. Specifically, the spacer element **202** may prevent bending or kinking of the edge profile element **114**. In some embodiments there may be one or more discrete spacer elements **202**, and in other embodiments the spacer element **202** may be continuous along the entire length of the edge profile element **114**.

[0032] FIG. 4 illustrates another embodiment of the countertop assembly, generally designated at **300**, according to the present disclosure. In this embodiment, the edge profile element **114** may be configured to receive an edge banding **302**. The edge banding **302** may be fabricated from a material to match the countertop surface material **104**, which may include, for example, tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, plastic, or other materials suitable for countertop surfaces. In the embodiment according to FIG. 4, the

upwardly extending second leg portion **114B** of the edge profile element **114** includes a recess into which the edge banding **302** may be inserted. In some embodiments this recess may be square-shaped and in other embodiments may be V-shaped. An installer may cut edge banding pieces **302** from, for example, tile squares, apply adhesive or grout to the pieces, and insert the pieces into the recess. Grouting that may be utilized for adhering a countertop surface material to a substrate may include any form of grout, adhesive, or mastic cementing layer appropriate for adhering a particular substrate material to a particular countertop surface material. A tile grout, which may be sand or not sand based, and may be color designated by consumer or fabricator, may be used for filling surface tile joints, or to fill the open spaces around the pieces of material inserted into the edge banding, if any.

[0033] Alternately, the edge banding **302** may be press fit into the recess so as to be more easily removable. If desired, the joints between any cut pieces of edge banding in the slot can be aligned with any joints that may be present in the countertop surface material above, such as, for example, joints between adjacent tile elements, if present. In embodiments, such as the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 4, the upwardly extending second leg element **114B** contacts the edge **106** of the substrate material **102** and/or the edge **108** of the countertop surface material **104**, and an additional fastener **304** or fasteners may be used to hold the edge profile element **114** securely against the edge of the substrate **102** and/or countertop surface material **104**.

[0034] Materials of construction of the various elements discussed above are not meant to be limited to the materials discussed with regard to the illustrated embodiments. For example, the substrate **102** may be constructed of plywood, particle board, hardwood, cork, combinations thereof, or any other material which is capable of serving as a substrate for a countertop and having an edge profile element attached thereto.

[0035] The countertop surface material may be formed from tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, plastic, combinations thereof, or other materials suitable for countertop surfaces. If tiles are used for the countertop surface material, the tiles can be cut on site to any dimension, e.g., to fit cutouts for sinks. Tiles may be pre-cut or otherwise provided as to any desired size, larger or smaller than one foot square. For example, a larger tile size might be desirable in some applications in order to minimize the number of joints.

[0036] The edge profile element may be formed from metal, plastic, composite, combinations thereof, or other suitable materials. The edge profile may be formed from metal which has been extruded, or shaped in some other manner. Inside and outside corners of the edge profile element may be factory precision cut, mitered and beveled as necessary, to achieve a precise fit. In a kit form this could also be factory ordered or accomplished by, for example, a skilled fabricator on site using the proper equipment. The spacer element or elements, where present, may be formed integral with the remainder of the edge profile element, or may be separate elements attached to the edge profile element or simply disposed between the edge profile and the substrate or countertop surface material. The edge profile element may have any of a number of coatings, such as, for example, an outer layer including a powder coating, a paint coating, an electroplated coating, a sandblasted or textured coating, or any other surface coating or treatment desired.

[0037] The edge profile element need not necessarily be formed from a smooth piece of material or of a material with constant thickness. For example, in some embodiments, the first leg portion of the edge profile element may include roughened portions or may be formed with a ribbed, zig-zagged-shaped, or textured profile which may, when mated to a substrate, provide a surface in contact with the substrate that may exhibit a greater degree of friction than an edge profile element with a uniform, smooth surface.

[0038] The shapes of the various elements shown in the drawings are not intended to be limiting. For example, a countertop according to some embodiments of the present disclosure may have a curved or rounded, rather than straight edge. Similarly, the countertop surface materials or substrates need not have planar or vertically oriented edge surfaces. For example, in some embodiments according to the present disclosure, a countertop substrate may have a beveled edge profile. Edge profile elements may be shaped in various ways to accommodate different possible variations in countertop edge profiles.

[0039] Countertop assemblies according to the present disclosure may be provided as factory-made units, as kits, or as individual components which may be purchased separately. If provided as a kit, as illustrated in FIG. 5, the kit, generally designated at **500**, may contain a countertop substrate **102**, a countertop surface material, illustrated as a group of tiles **104** in FIG. 5, and an edge profile element **114**. In some embodiments, a kit **500** according to the present invention may contain a substrate material **102** made of plywood. In some embodiments a kit **500** according to the present disclosure may contain a countertop surface material **104** fabricated from at least one of tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, plastic, combinations thereof, or any other material suitable for a countertop surface. A kit **500** according to some embodiments may include instructions **502** for assembling the kit **500**. A kit **500** according to some embodiments may include an edge profile element **114** and instructions for mounting the edge profile element **114** onto a countertop assembly. A kit according to some embodiments may include fasteners **116**. In some embodiments, the kit may contain adhesive material or grouting, such as container of adhesive **504** as illustrated in FIG. 5. Grouting that may be utilized for adhering a countertop surface material to a substrate may include any form of include any form of grout, adhesive, or mastic cementing layer appropriate for adhering a particular substrate material that may be included in the kit to a particular countertop surface material that may be included in the kit. A tile grout, illustrated as container of grout **506** in FIG. 5, which may or may not be sand-based, and may selected from a variety of colors designated by the consumer or fabricator, may be included in the kit to be used for filling surface tile joints, if any.

[0040] The present disclosure encompasses methods of constructing a countertop. Some methods may include steps of providing a substrate for a countertop, disposing a countertop surface material onto the substrate such that at least one edge of each of the substrate and the surface material are substantially aligned, and securing an edge profile element to the lower surface of the substrate. In some methods, the step of securing the edge profile element to the lower surface of the substrate may include using fasteners which are capable of being later removed without damage to the countertop.

[0041] Some methods according to the present disclosure may involve following a set of instructions which describe

various steps in the construction of the countertop. In some embodiments the instructions may comprise steps for securing an edge profile element to a pre-existing countertop. Some methods may include following a set of instructions which comprise steps such as laying out the materials for the countertop assembly, cutting the materials to size, aligning and adhering the countertop surface material to the substrate, securing the edge profile element to the substrate, and cleaning the completed assembly. According to some methods, aligning and securing the countertop surface material to the substrate may include aligning the countertop surface material such that it substantially coextensively overlays the substrate and such that at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material is substantially aligned with the at least one edge surface of the substrate. According to some methods, the edge profile element may be removably attached to the countertop substrate material, and may be attached using one or more fasteners, such as, for example, screws.

[0042] Having thus described several aspects of at least one embodiment of this disclosure, it is to be appreciated various alterations, modifications, and improvements will readily occur to those skilled in the art. Such alterations, modifications, and improvements are intended to be part of this disclosure, and are intended to be within the spirit and scope of the disclosure. Accordingly, the foregoing description and figures are by way of example only.

What is claimed is:

1. A countertop comprising:

a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface;

a countertop surface material having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface, the countertop surface material disposed on and substantially coextensively overlaying the upper surface of the substrate such that the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material is substantially aligned with the at least one edge surface of the substrate; and

an edge profile element removably attached to the lower surface of the substrate, the edge profile element including a first leg portion configured to be secured to the lower surface of the substrate and a second leg portion, extending from the first leg portion, configured to substantially overlay the at least one edge surface of the substrate and the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material.

2. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material is arranged substantially co-planar with the at least one edge surface of the substrate.

3. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the second leg portion of the edge profile element includes an upper edge configured to engage the countertop surface material along the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material and proximate to the upper surface of the countertop surface material, substantially along an entire length of the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material.

4. The countertop of claim 3, wherein the second leg portion of the edge profile element is configured with a body portion that is spaced away from at least the at least one edge surface of the substrate.

5. The countertop of claim 4, further comprising at least one spacer element disposed in the space defined by the body portion of the second leg of the edge profile element.

6. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the edge profile element is secured to the lower surface of the substrate with a fastener.

7. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the edge profile element is fabricated from metal.

8. The countertop of claim 7, wherein the edge profile element comprises a continuous metal band.

9. The countertop of claim 7, wherein the edge profile element includes at least one of mitered edges and die cut edges.

10. The countertop of claim 7, wherein the edge profile element further comprises an outer layer including at least one of a powder coating, a paint coating, and an electroplated coating.

11. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the countertop surface material is fabricated from at least one of tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, and plastic.

12. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the edge profile element includes a recess formed therein adapted and configured to accommodate an edge banding mounted therein.

13. The countertop of claim 12, wherein the edge banding is fabricated from at least one of tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, and plastic.

14. The countertop of claim 13, further comprising at least one fastener configured to secure the edge profile element to the substrate at least one position along the at least one edge surface of the substrate.

15. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the substrate comprises plywood.

16. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the second leg portion of the edge profile element includes an upper edge configured to apply a pressure against at least a portion of the countertop surface material along the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material.

17. The countertop of claim 1, wherein the edge profile element is configured to engage another edge profile element at adjacent lengthwise ends.

18. A countertop edging kit comprising:

a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface;

a countertop surface material having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface, the countertop surface material being adapted and configured to be disposed on and substantially coextensively overlay the upper surface of the substrate such that the at least one edge of the countertop surface material is substantially aligned with the at least one edge surface of the substrate; and

an edge profile element including a first leg portion configured to be secured to the lower surface of the substrate and a second leg portion, extending from the first leg portion, configured to substantially overlay the at least one edge surface of the substrate and the at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material.

19. The countertop edging kit of claim 18, wherein the substrate comprises plywood.

20. The countertop edging kit of claim 19, wherein the substrate comprises plywood with a thickness of about 0.75 inches.

21. The countertop edging kit of claim 18, wherein the countertop surface material is fabricated from at least one of tile, stone, ceramic, marble, granite, formica, and plastic.

22. The countertop edging kit of claim 18, further comprising instructions for assembling the kit.

23. The countertop edging kit of claim 18, further comprising an adhesive material.

24. A countertop edging kit comprising:

an edge profile element including a first leg portion configured to be secured to a lower surface of a substrate and a second leg portion, extending from the first leg portion, configured to substantially overlay at least one edge surface of the substrate; and

instructions for mounting the edge profile element onto a countertop assembly.

25. The countertop edging kit of claim 24, further comprising fasteners.

26. A method of constructing a countertop comprising:

providing a substrate having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface;

disposing a countertop surface material having an upper surface and a lower surface and at least one edge surface on the upper surface of the substrate, the countertop surface material substantially coextensively overlaying the substrate and such that at least one edge surface of the countertop surface material is substantially aligned with the at least one edge surface of the substrate; and

securing an edge profile element to the lower surface of the substrate.

27. The method of constructing a countertop of claim 26, wherein securing the edge profile element to the lower surface of the substrate includes using fasteners capable of being removed from the substrate.

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