March 3, 1964 R. C. AMUNDSON 3,123,244

PROTECTOR FOR ELECTRICAL SWITCH AND OUTLET BOXES

Filed April 13, 1962

FIG. 1

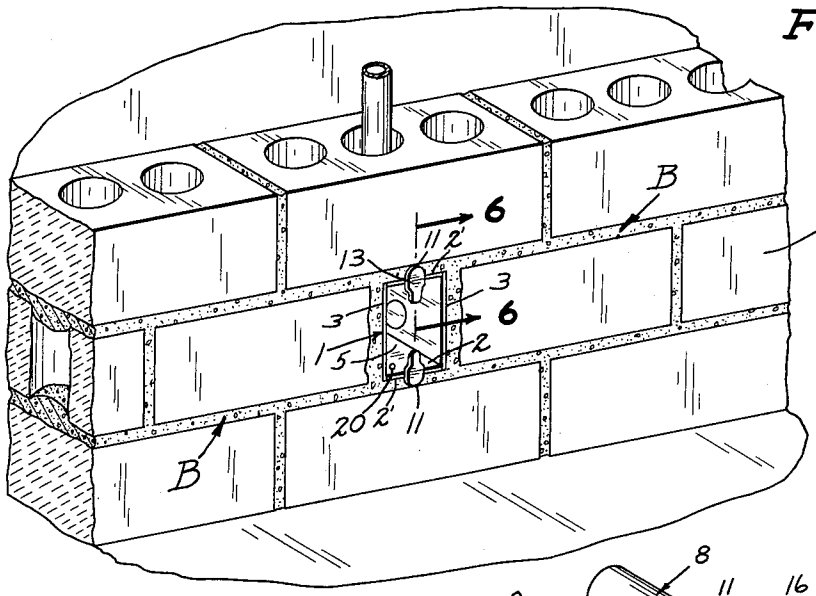


FIG. 2

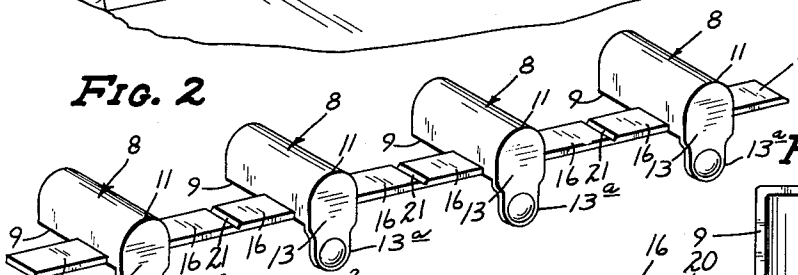


FIG. 3

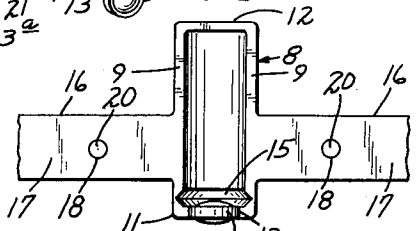


FIG. 4

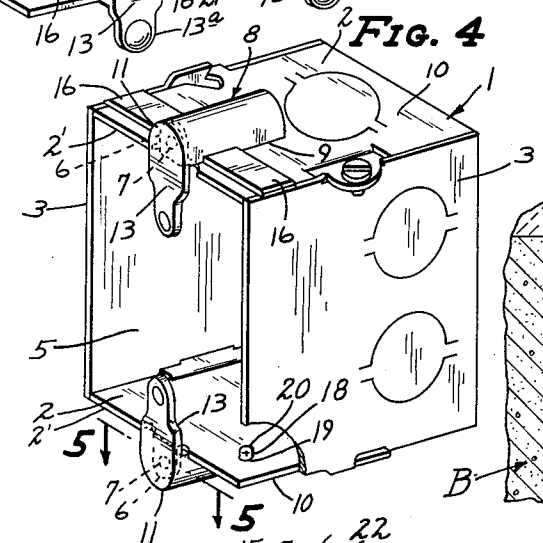


FIG. 5

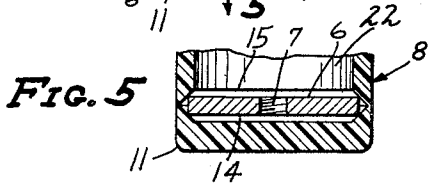
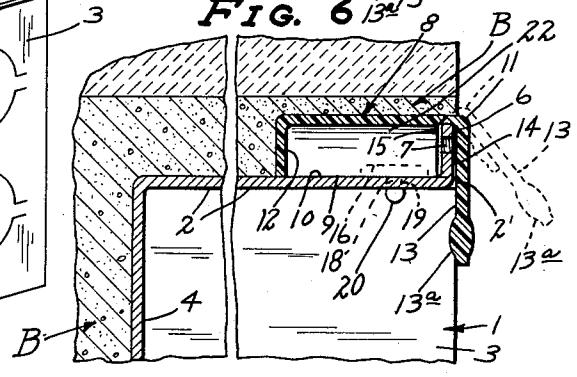


FIG. 6



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3,123,244
PROTECTOR FOR ELECTRICAL SWITCH AND OUTLET BOXES

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3 Claims. (Cl. 220—3.4)

My invention relates to electrical outlet boxes of the type which are normally recessed into a plaster wall or other cementitious surface in building construction.

More particularly, my invention relates to electrical outlet boxes of the type which include opposed end walls having laterally outwardly projecting screw threaded apertured lugs thereon for anchoring the opposite ends of the plug-assembly-strap.

It is well known that in the construction industry, electric outlet boxes are installed by mounting them on temporary floor, ceiling or wall forms and then pouring the concrete or applying the plaster wherein the boxes are to be contained. Despite careful mounting of the boxes and other steps taken to keep them free from plaster, the plaster too frequently gets into the threaded apertures in the plug-assembly-strap anchoring lugs, and/or gets behind said apertures, thereby making it extremely time-consuming and difficult at best to later install the plug-assembly-straps. This problem has long been recognized and attempts have been made to solve said problem, Patent No. 2,149,719 representing such an attempt.

The primary object of my invention is the provision of novel means whereby the laterally outwardly projecting plug-assembly-strap anchoring lugs of such electrical outlet boxes may be completely protected during installation and plastering.

A further object of my invention is the provision of devices of the class above described wherein the means completely covering and protecting said flanges provides means for readily exposing said portions with a minimum of time and effort.

A further object of my invention is the provision of devices of the class above described which may be molded from suitable plastic such as polyethylene and which may be installed with a minimum of time and effort.

A still further object of my invention is the provision of devices of the class described which may be produced at a minimum of cost and which are foolproof in their operation.

The above and still further objects and advantages of my invention will become apparent from the following detailed specification, appended claims and attached drawings.

Referring to the drawings, which illustrate the invention, and wherein like reference characters indicate like parts or elements throughout the several views:

FIG. 1 is a fragmentary view in perspective of a masonry wall and illustrating my invention;

FIG. 2 is a view in perspective of a plurality of my devices molded in strip form;

FIG. 3 is a view in bottom plan of one of my novel devices;

FIG. 4 is a view in perspective of an outlet box equipped with my novel protective device, some parts being broken away and some parts shown in section;

FIG. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary view in section as seen from the line 5—5 of FIG. 4; and

FIG. 6 is an enlarged fragmentary view in section as seen from the line 6—6 of FIG. 1.

Referring with greater particularity to the drawings, the numeral 1 indicates in its entirety a conventional electrical outlet box having opposed end walls 2, opposed side walls 3, a rear wall 4 and an open front 5. In conventional manner, the end walls 2 are formed along their

outer edges 2' with laterally outwardly projecting anchoring lugs 6. Lugs 6 have apertures 7, preferably threaded for the reception of the holding screws, not shown but which are conventionally carried by opposite ends of the plug-assembly-straps which are anchored to the outlet boxes 1 during the completion of the wiring job after formation of a wall in which it is recessed such for instance as the wall A of FIG. 1.

In accordance with my invention, the anchoring lugs 6 are each protected by means of an axially elongated hood 8, opposite side edges 9 of which are adapted to engage the exterior surface 10 of one of the end walls 2 with the outer end portions 11 thereof enclosing the adjacent lug 6. A wall 12 permanently closes the inner end of the hood 8 in spaced relation to the anchoring lugs 6 whereas transversely elongated flaps 13 serve as a temporary closure to the outer ends of the hood 8. As shown, the flaps 13 immediately overlie and protect the outer surfaces 14 of the anchoring lugs 6, the opposed inner ends of said flaps overlying the outer edges 2' of the end walls 2 projecting therebeyond to facilitate grasping for the purpose of removing same from the full line lug protecting position of FIG. 6 as will hereinafter be explained in greater detail. These inwardly projected grasping end portions of the flaps 13 are identified by the reference character 13*a*.

To facilitate removal of the protective flaps 13 the inner side wall of the hood 8, immediately adjacent the flaps 13 is greatly weakened by recesses or channels 15 extending from edge 9 to edge 9 thereof.

Projecting laterally outwardly in opposite directions from the side edges 9 of the hood 8 are anchoring wings 16 which on their under surfaces 17 are formed to define relatively narrow laterally projecting fingers 18 which are adapted to be snugly received in apertures 19 in the end walls 2 of the outlet box 1. Preferably the hood 8, flaps 13 and wings 16 are molded from a suitable plastic material, such as polyethylene, and the fingers 18 are provided with enlarged heads 20 at their inner ends which are adapted to be passed through the openings 19 in the end walls 2, thus positively locking the hoods 8 in position against accidental removal.

As shown in FIG. 2, my device may well be made in strip form each thereof being readily severable from the other along weakening or severance lines 21.

When an outlet box 1, with my novel protective devices thereon, such as shown in FIG. 4, is installed in a wall A the anchoring lugs 6 are adequately protected from plaster or other cementitious materials identified by the reference character B, see particularly FIG. 6. Furthermore, that portion of the hood 8 which projects inwardly from the anchoring lug 6 forms an ample cavity 22 for unrestricted subsequent reception of a screw threaded bolt, not shown but associated with the plug-assembly-strap. As shown by dotted lines in FIG. 6, the uncontaminated anchoring lug 6 is exposed for this purpose merely by the operator grasping the inwardly projected end 13*a* and forcing same outwardly, severance thereof from the hood 8 being along the weakening recesses or channels 15.

My invention has been thoroughly tested and found to be completely satisfactory for the accomplishment of the above objects, and while I have shown and described a preferred embodiment, I wish it to be specifically understood that the same is capable of modification without departure from the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. A protective device for electrical outlet boxes of the type which include opposed end and side walls, a rear wall and an open front, said end walls adjacent said open front and intermediate said side walls defining laterally

outwardly projecting apertured mounting lugs which lie in substantially the plane of said open front for anchoring the opposite ends of a plug-assembly strap, said device comprising,

(*a*) a hood having an open bottom and adapted to totally receive therein one of said anchoring lugs,

(*b*) said hood defining a temporary closure flap having a grasping portion which extends beyond the plane of said open bottom,

(*c*) means weakening said flap to permit severance thereof from said hood, and

(*d*) means for securing said hood to the exterior surface of one of the end walls of said outlet box in covering relation to the anchoring lug associated therewith, whereby said temporary closure flap immediately overlies said anchoring lug with said grasping portion thereof extending into said open front.

2. The structure defined in claim 1 in which said means comprises wings formed integrally with opposite side edges of said hood,

(*a*) said wings being formed to define inwardly projecting fingers adapted to be frictionally received within apertures in said end wall of said outlet box.

3. The structure defined in claim 2 in which said hood, closure flap and wings are integrally formed from flexible resilient plastic material,

(*a*) said fingers having enlarged heads adapted to be forced through the said openings in said end wall.

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