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(54) OUTDOOR PEDESTAL CLOSURE ASSEMBLY WITH FLOOD PROTECTION

(76) Inventors: **Jerome A. Maloney**, Sugar Grove, IL (US); **Albert McGovern**, Naperville, IL (US)

Correspondence Address:
HARNESS, DICKEY, & PIERCE, P.L.C
7700 BONHOMME, STE 400
ST. LOUIS, MO 63105 (US)

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B65D 55/14 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **220/210**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An improved outdoor telecommunication pedestal having a dome and a two part base. The base includes inner and outer horizontal and vertical ribs to greatly enhance in-ground stability. The dome also includes vertical ribs to engage slots in the base to give good security. Security is further enhanced by a spring loaded lock mechanism that requires only a quarter turn to unlock. A cam follower wall is provided on a slider of the lock to allow a snap attachment of the dome and the base once full engagement is reached.

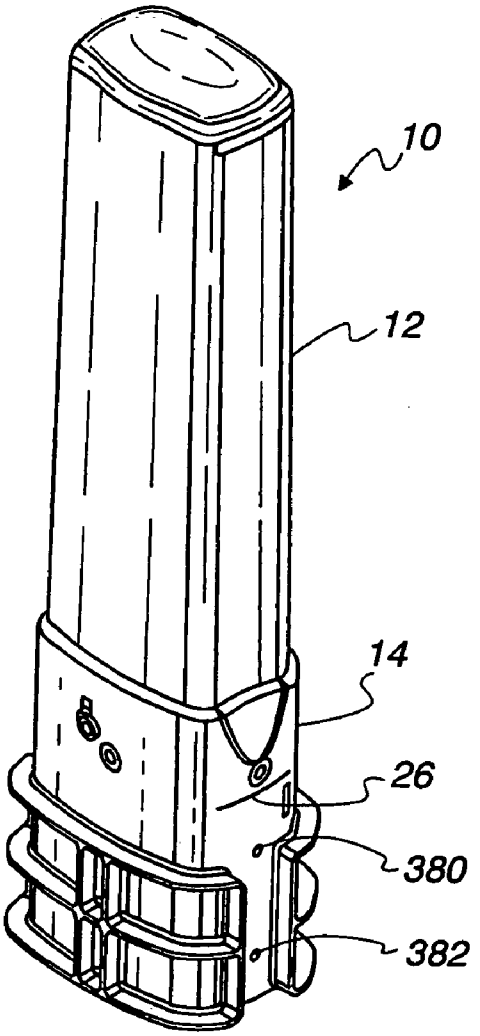


Fig. 1

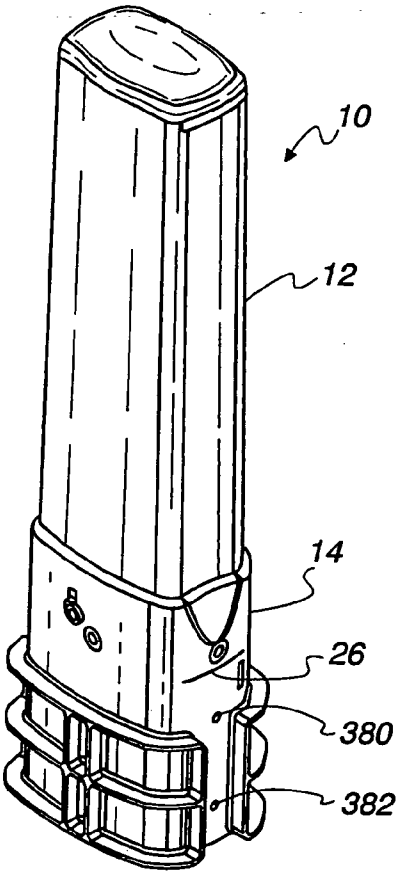


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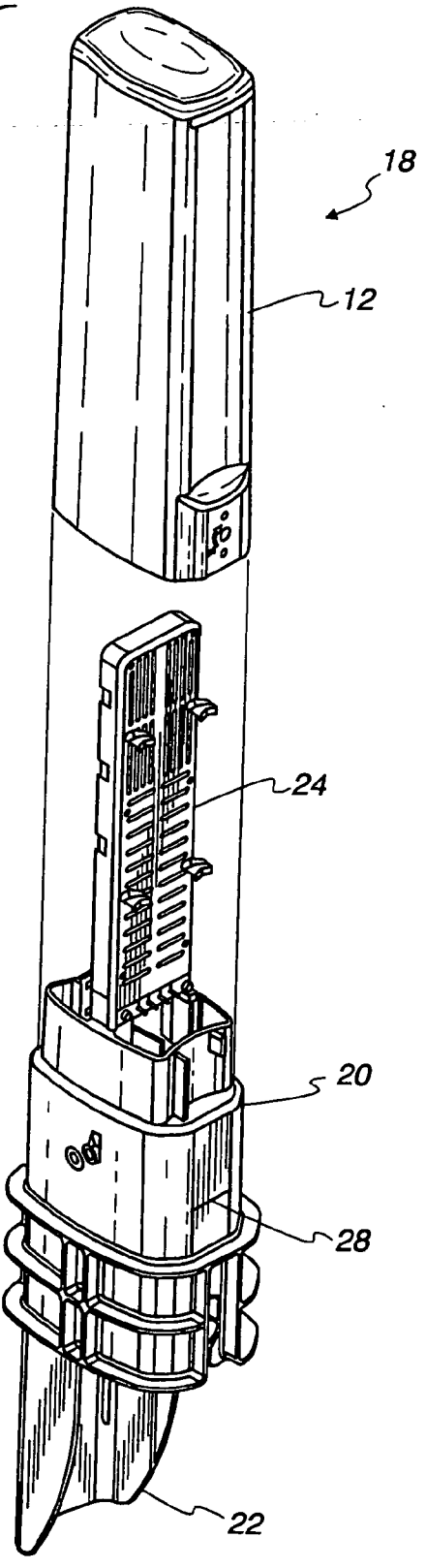


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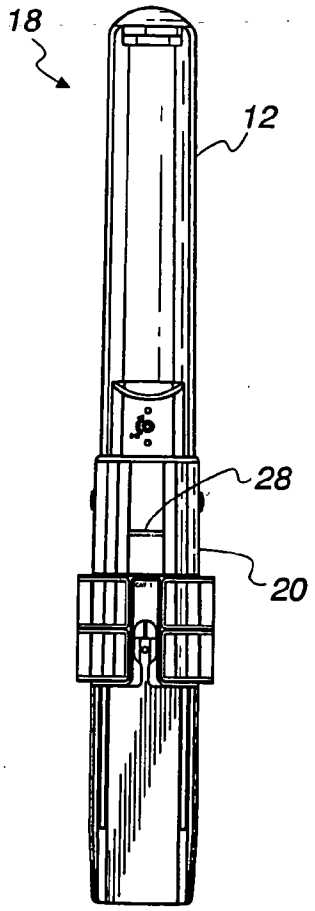


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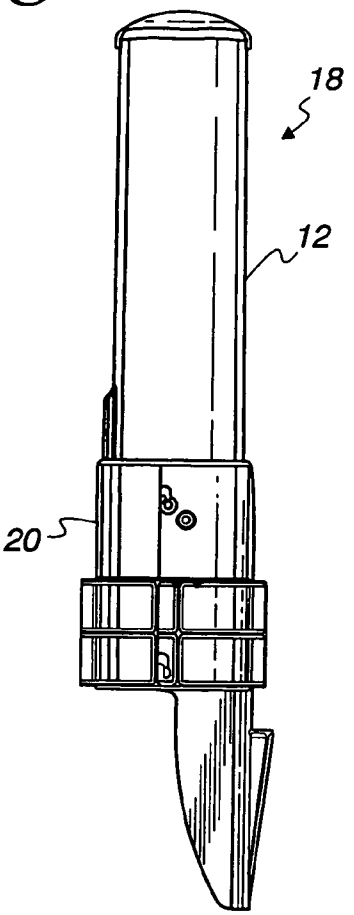


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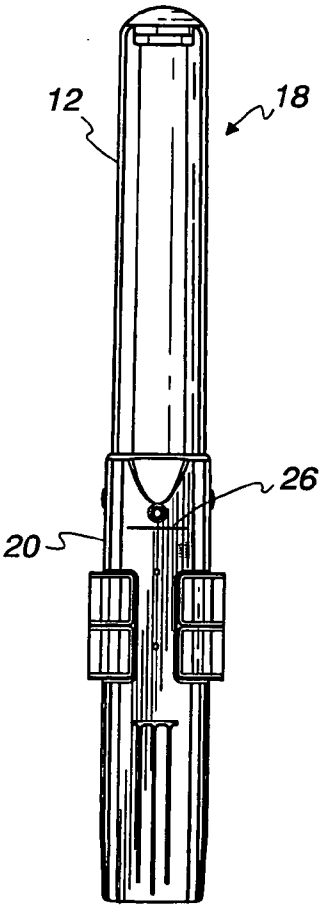


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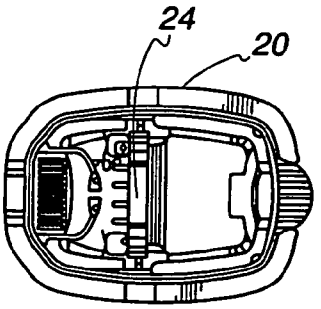


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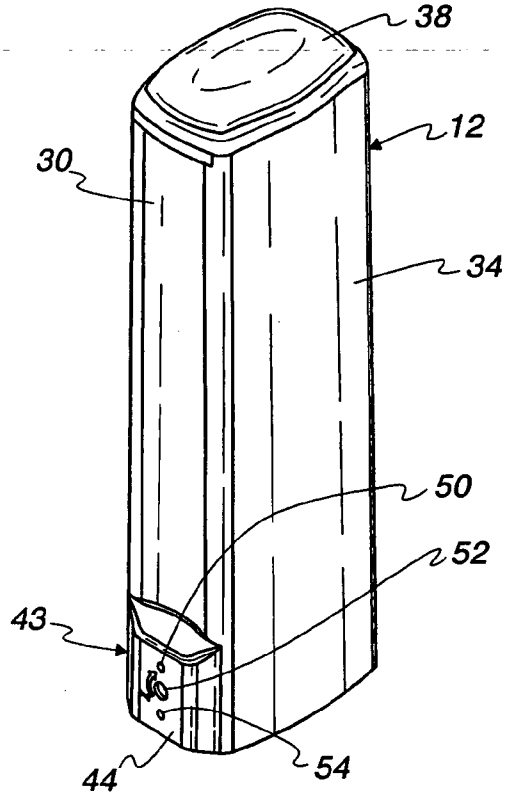


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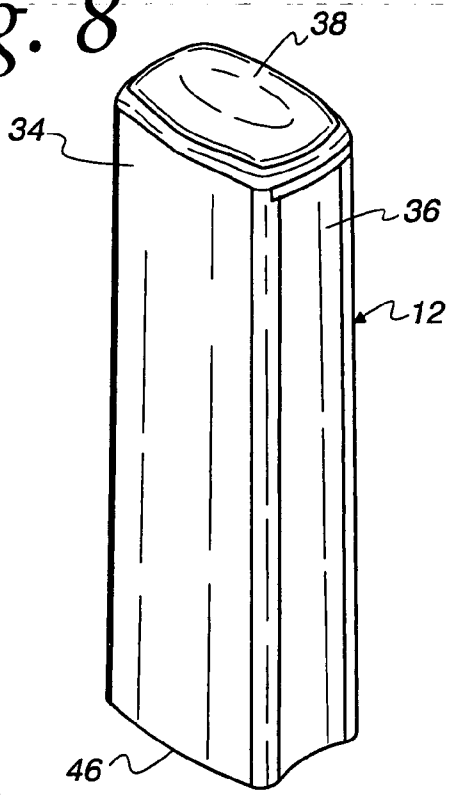


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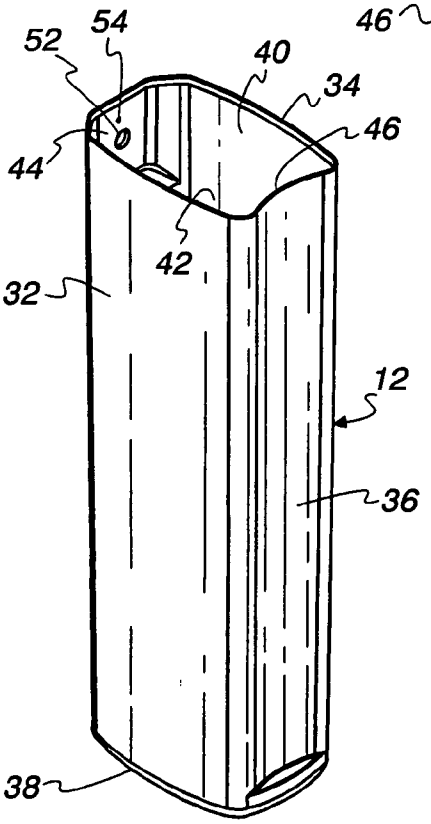


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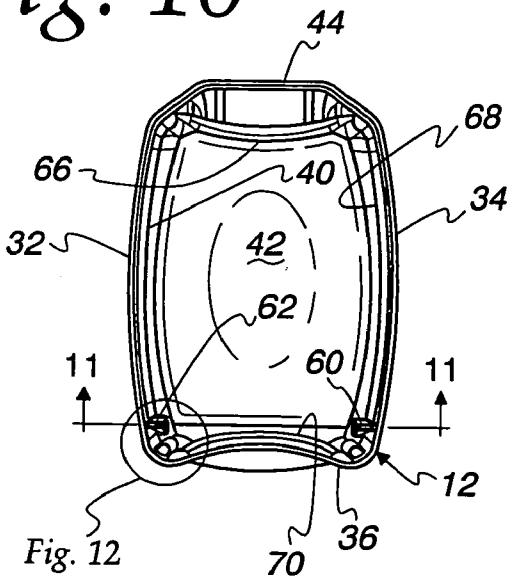


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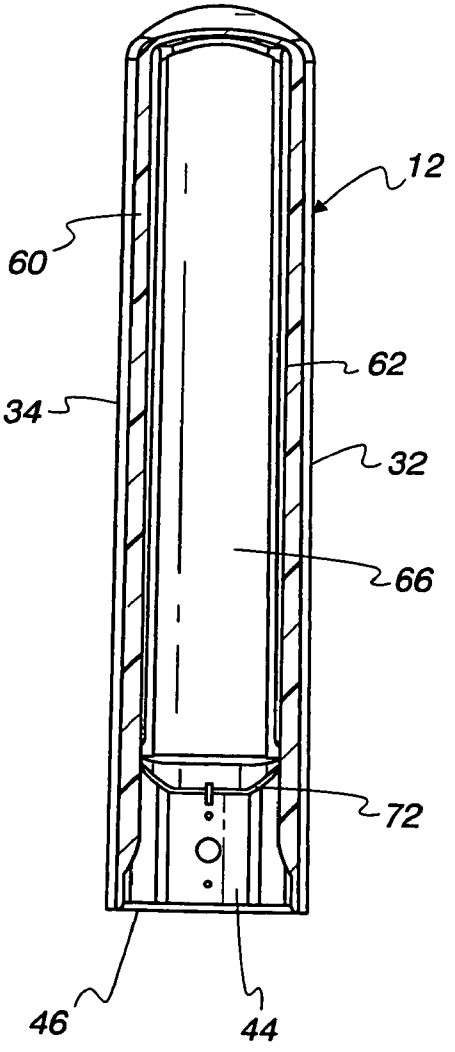


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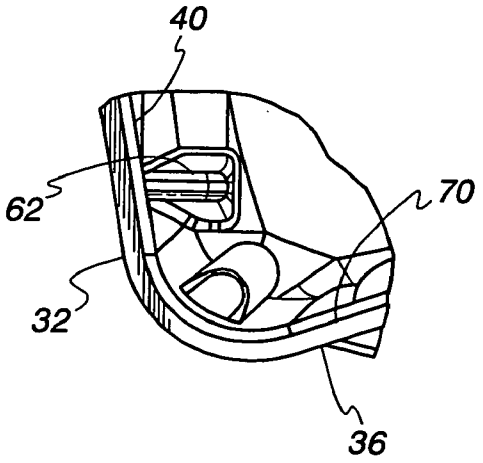


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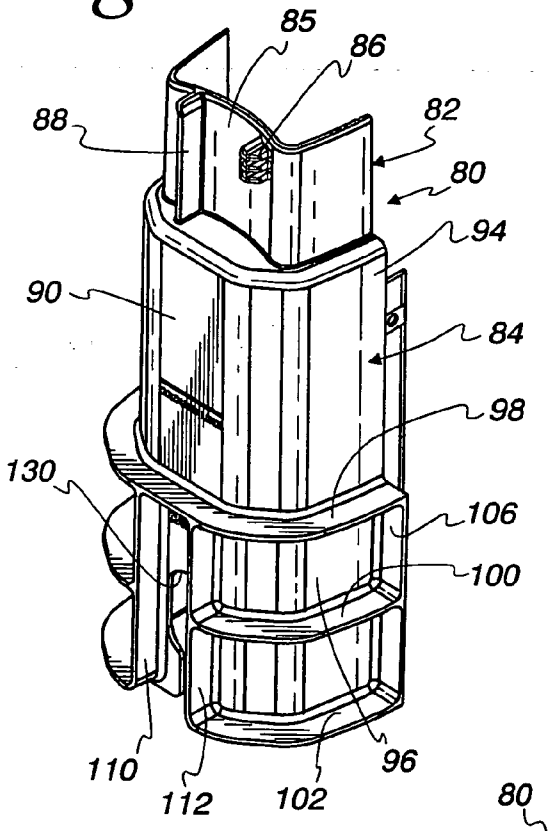


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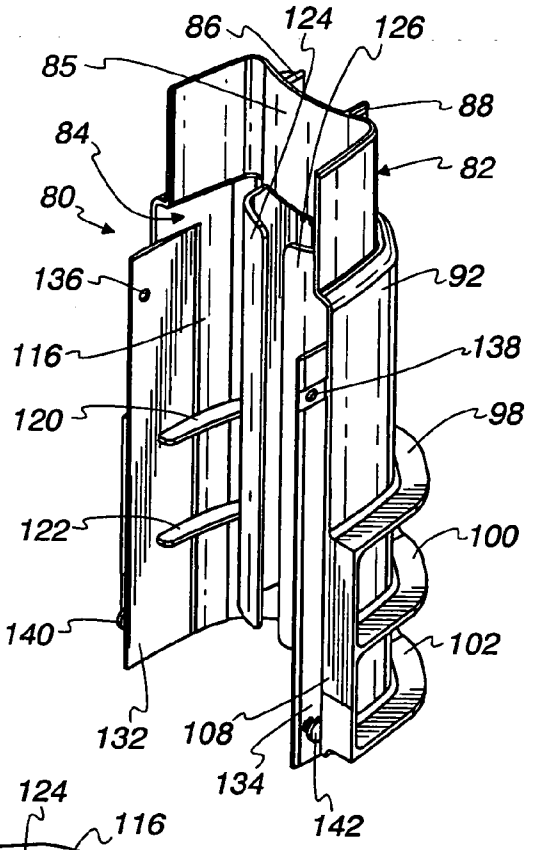


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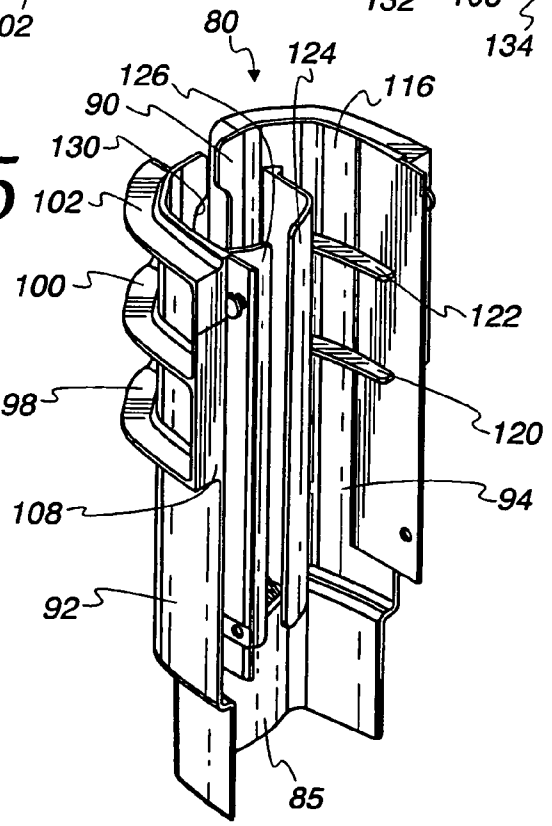


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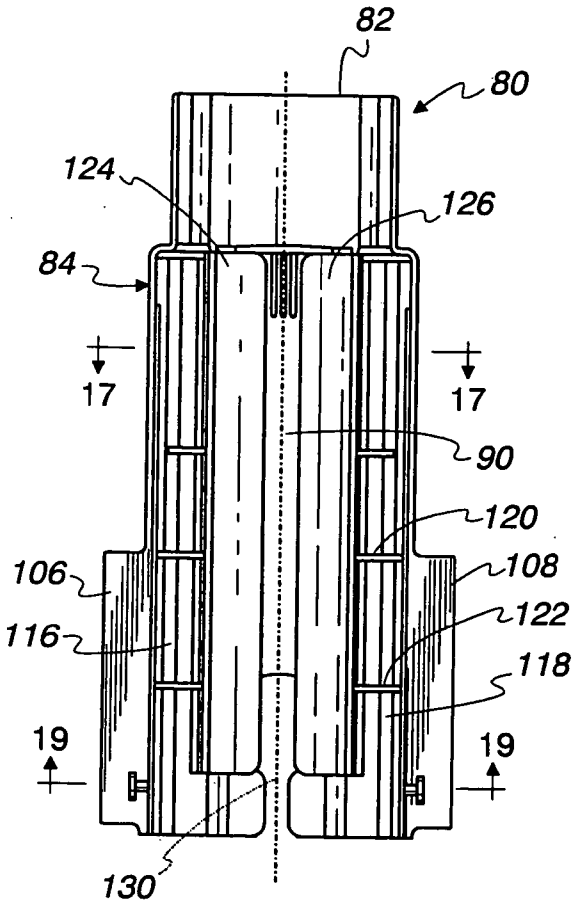


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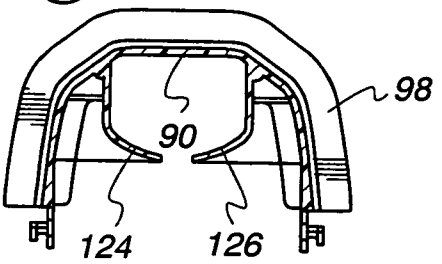


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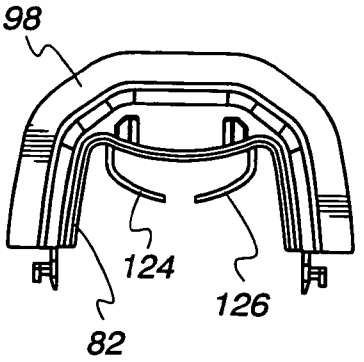


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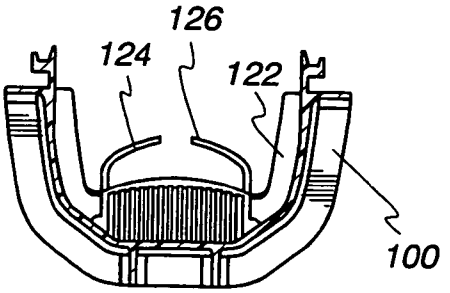


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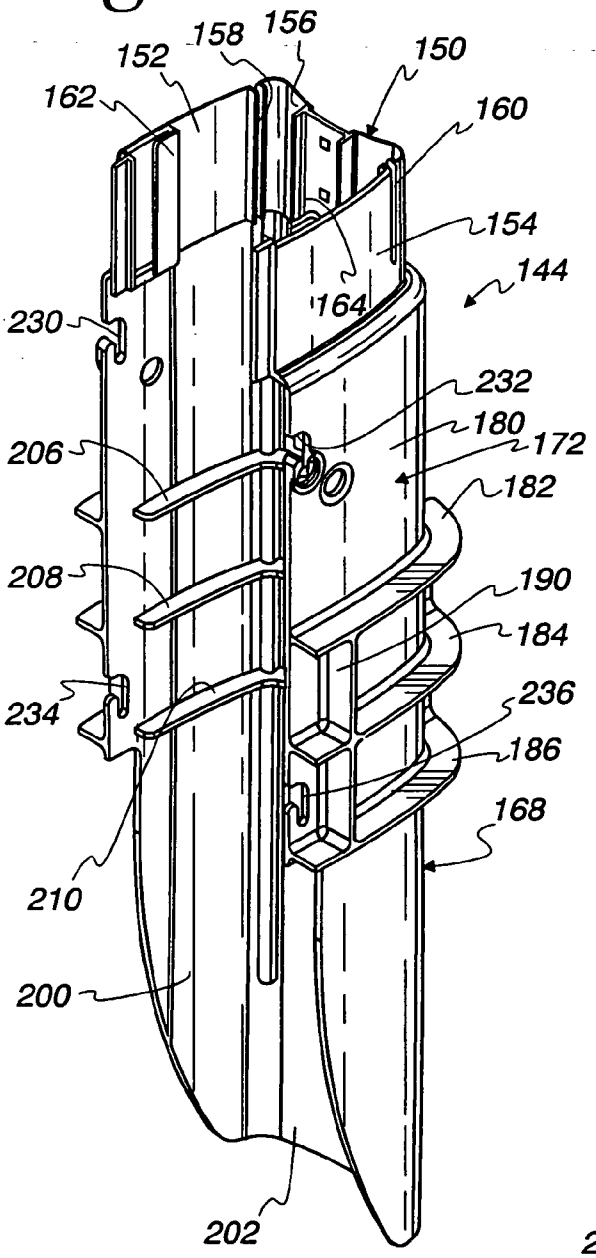

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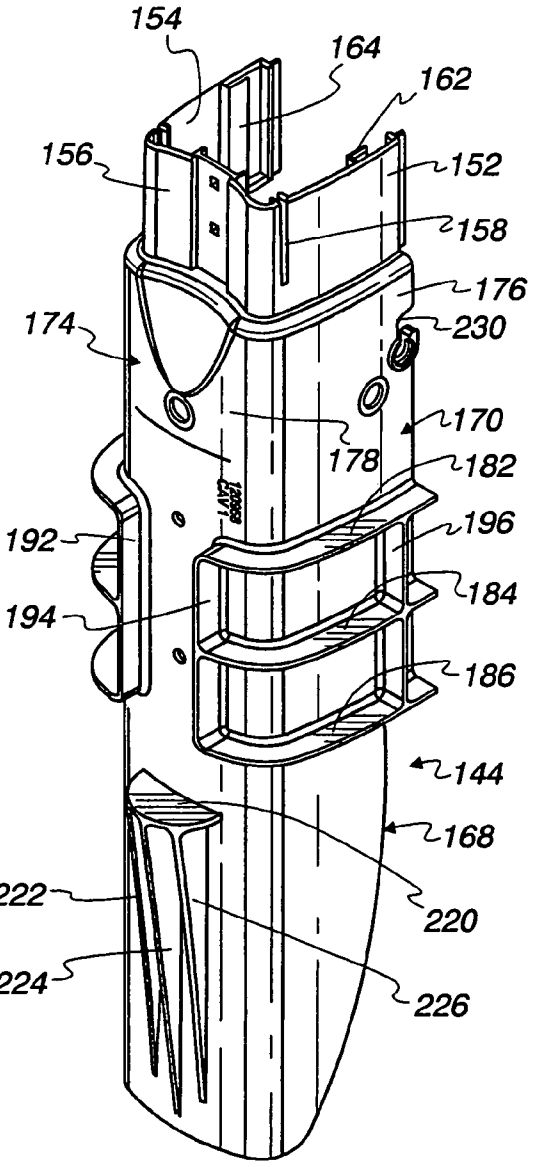

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Fig. 22

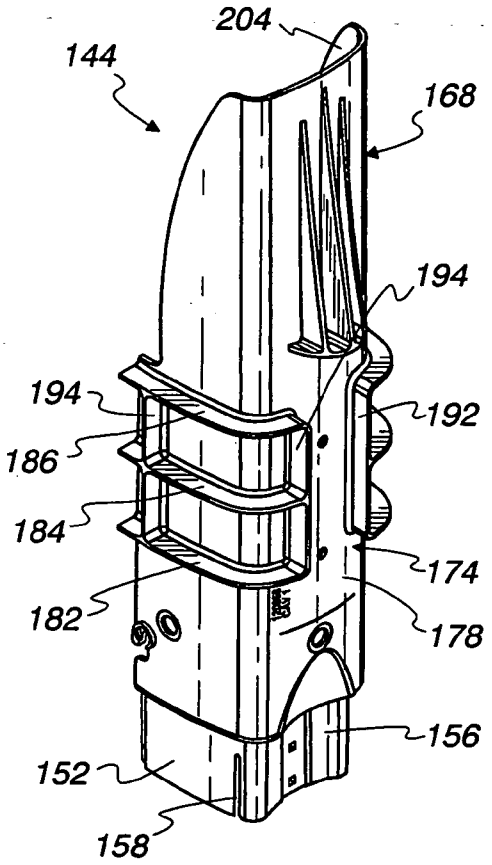


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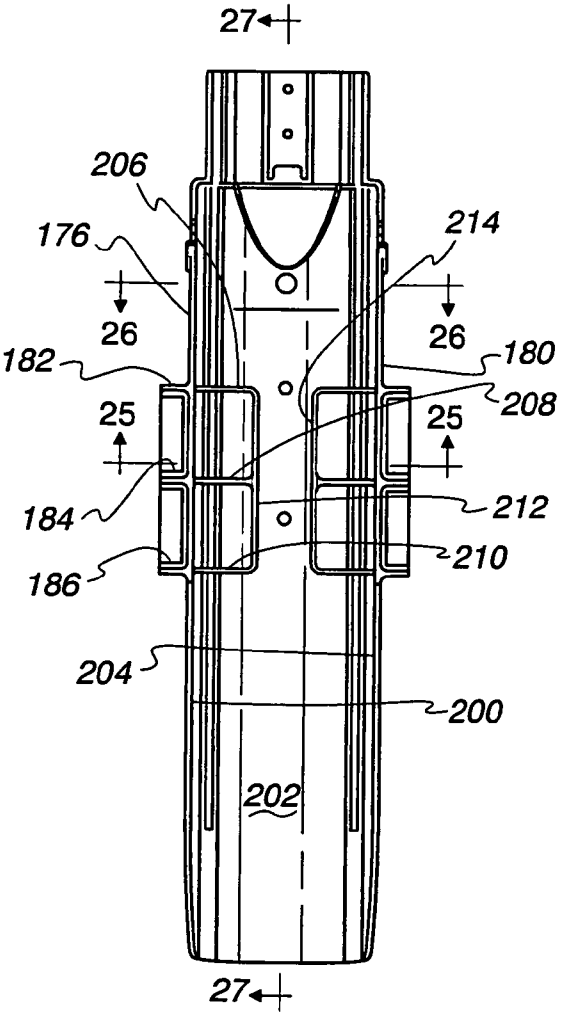


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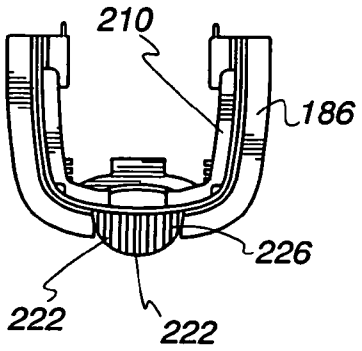


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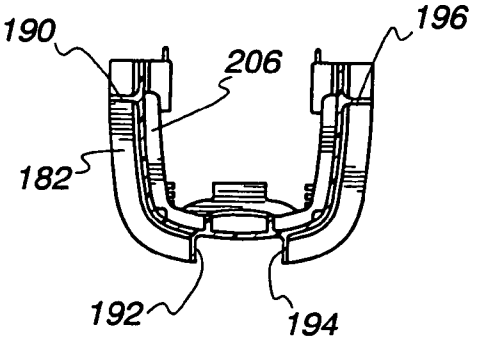


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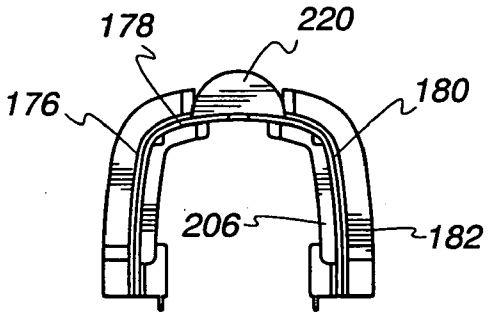


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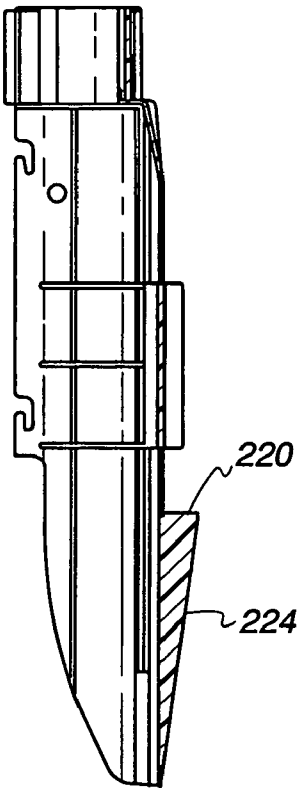


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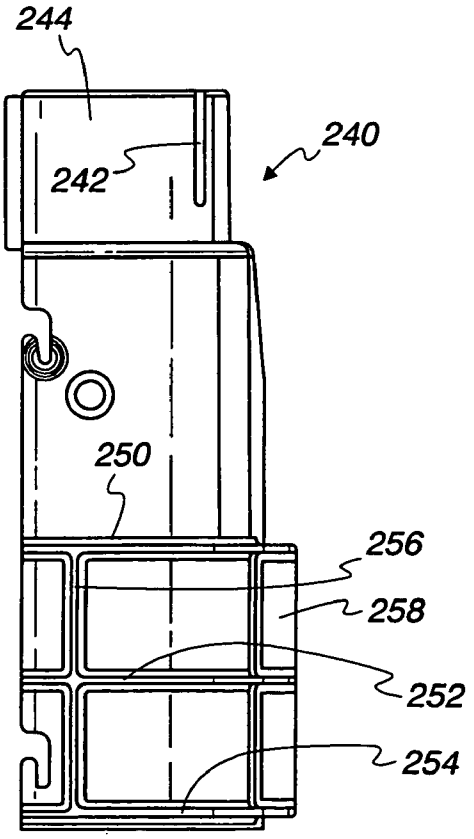


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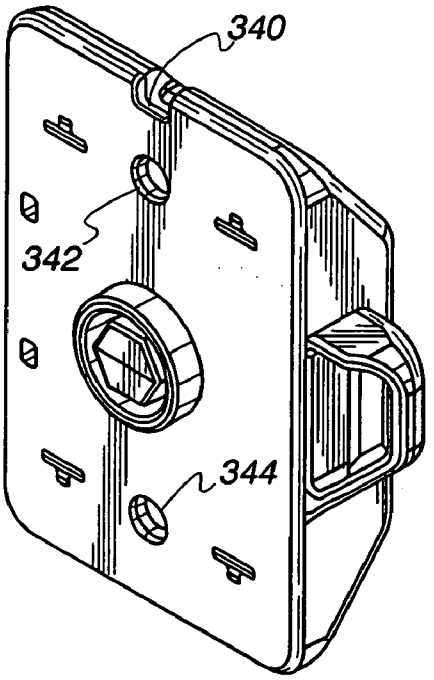


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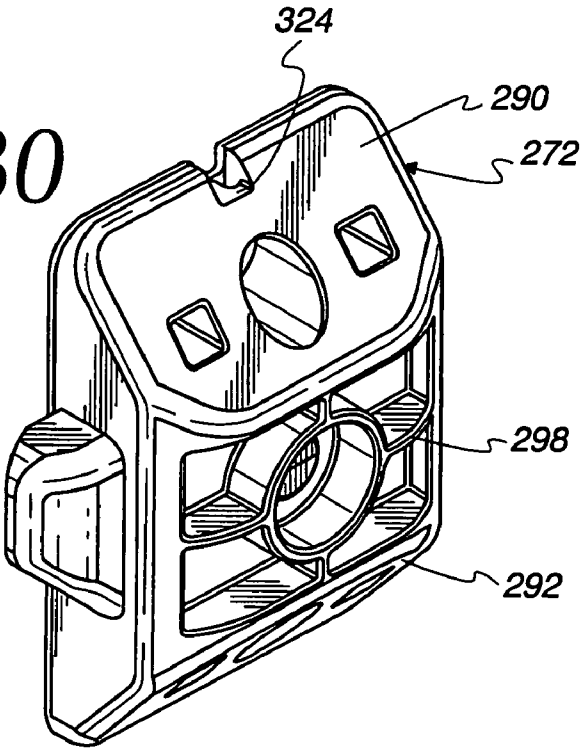


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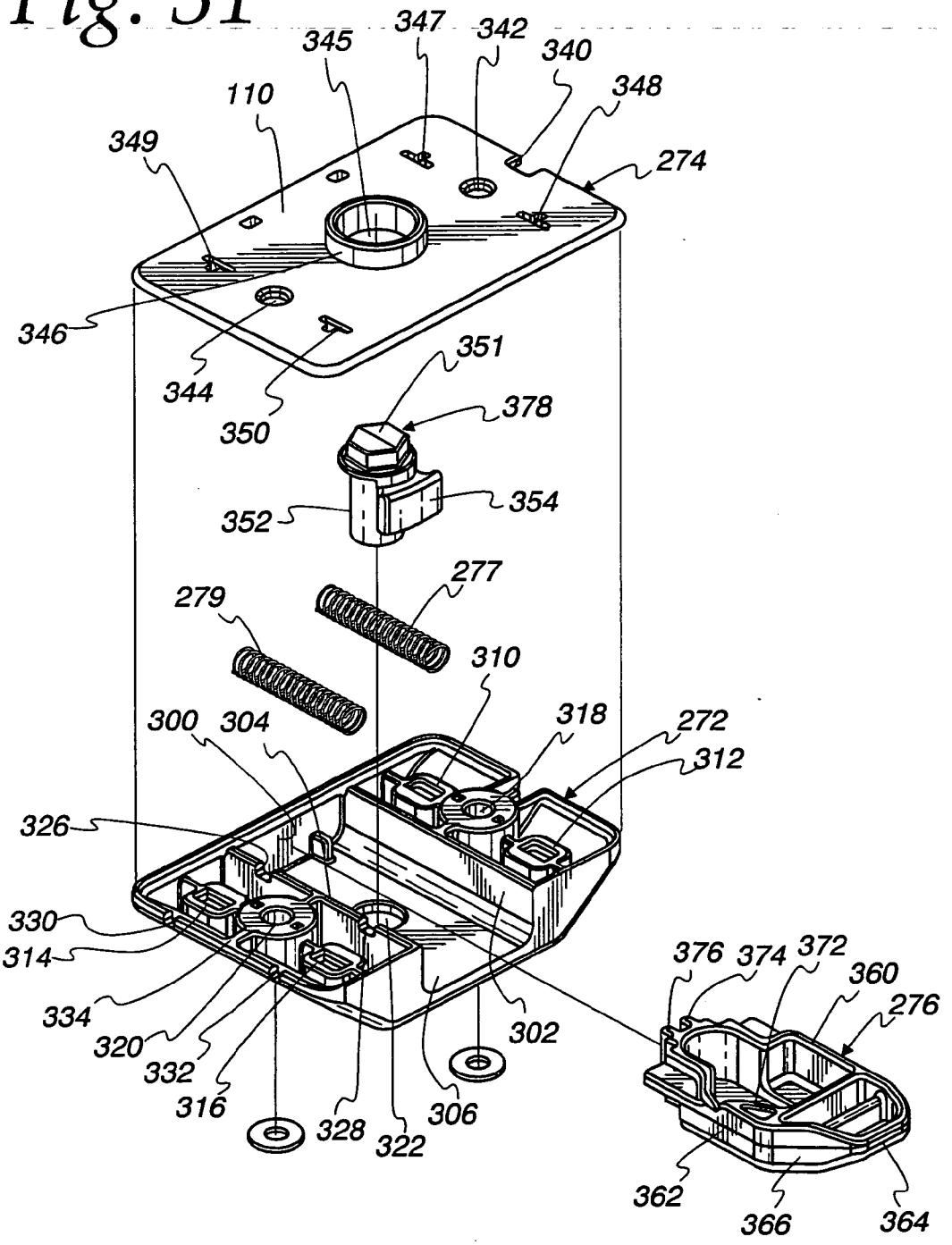

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Fig. 32

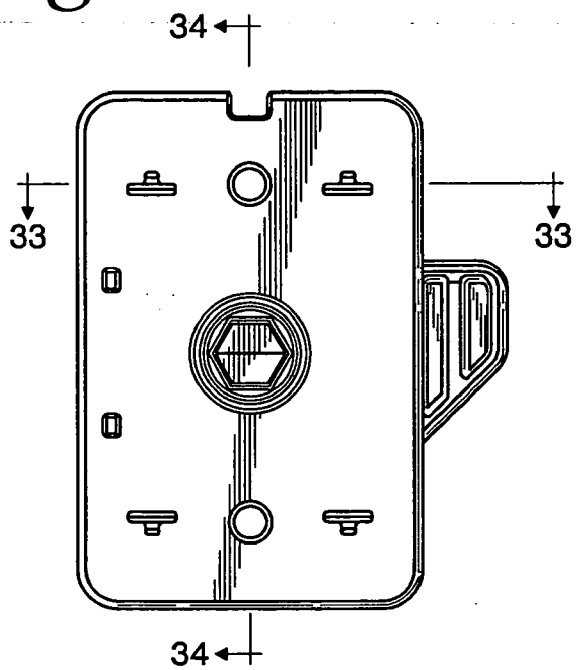


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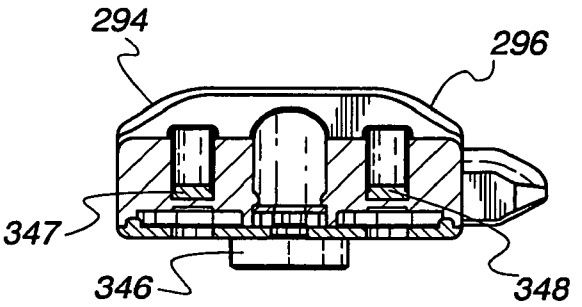


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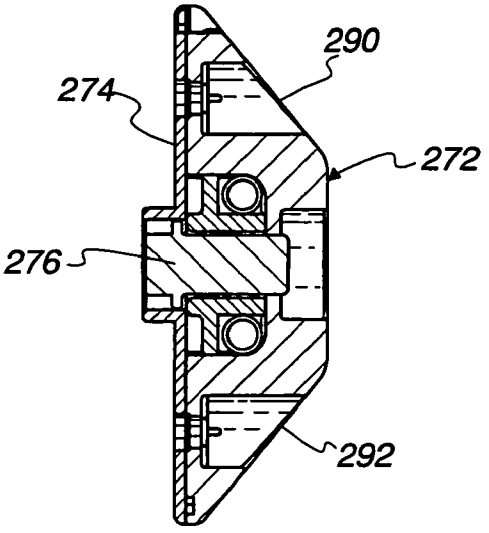


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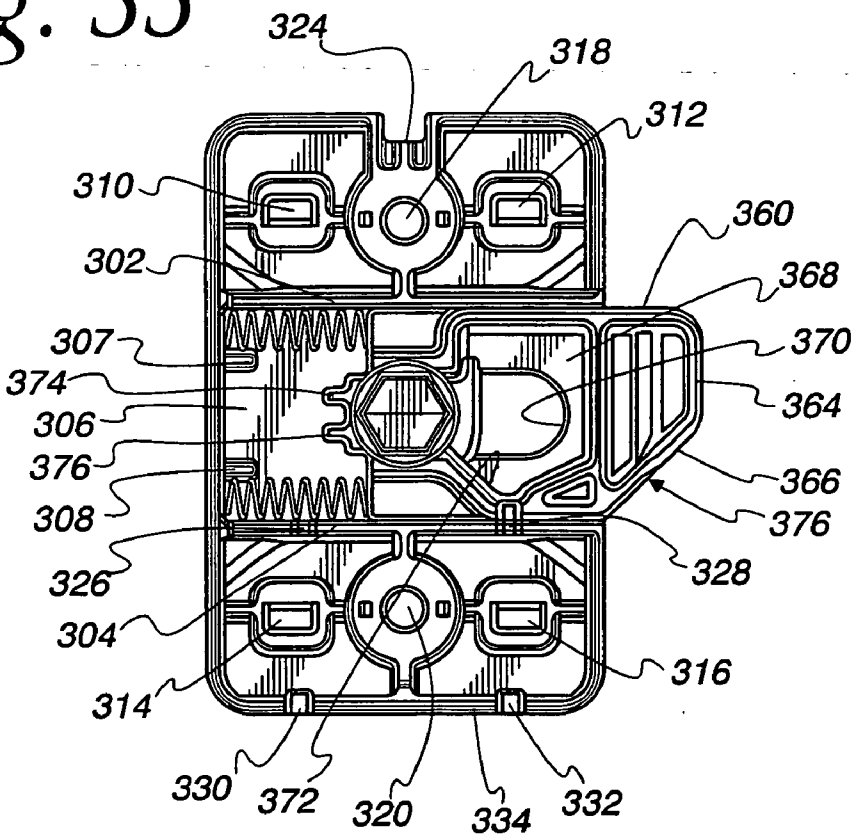
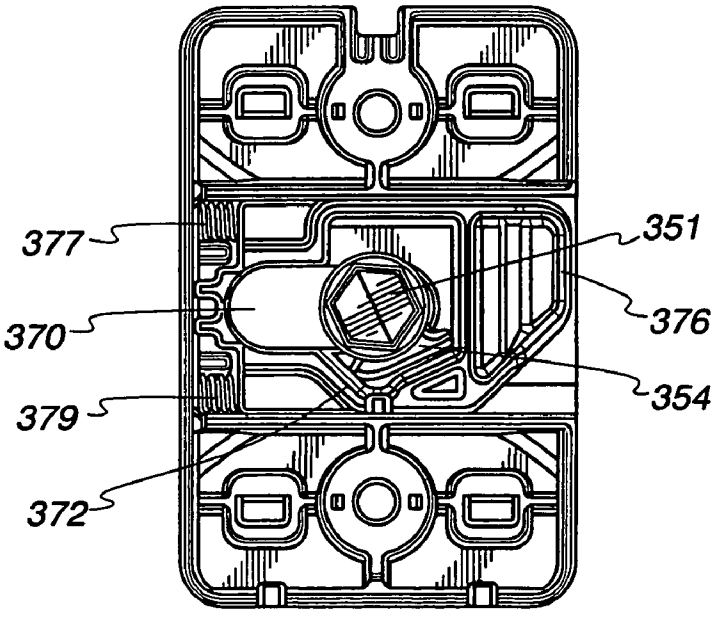

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Fig. 36


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OUTDOOR PEDESTAL CLOSURE ASSEMBLY WITH FLOOD PROTECTION

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a divisional of U.S. application Ser. No. 10/712,612 filed Nov. 11, 2003, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH

[0002] Not applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] 1. Field of the Invention

[0004] The present invention relates to an improved pedestal closure assembly and more particularly, to a pedestal closure assembly that is easy and quick to install, easy to open and close and very stable in the ground into which the assembly is placed.

[0005] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0006] Telecommunications, cable television, power distribution equipment and the like include primary cable loops, terminal blocks, wires and connectors. These elements are commonly located out of plant and subject to ambient weather conditions. Since the necessary equipment is located outside, a protective covering is required to safeguard the equipment from human interference as well as from the environment. Therefore, such protective covering must provide structural as well as environmental protection.

[0007] One such protective covering is in the form of a pedestal closure assembly. The pedestal structure includes a housing with a sufficient volume but occupying a small area and placeable in a convenient working orientation. Inside the housing cable pairs may be connected to each other and such connections are made at connector blocks which are mounted to a mounting plate inside the pedestal structure. The connector blocks include a number of terminals where the pairs of wires and the cable are stripped of their insulation and connected.

[0008] A base portion of the pedestal closure assembly is substantially buried in the ground but includes a passageway to permit underground cables to be received into the interior of the pedestal. The cables extend through the base section and are covered by a top or dome which is mounted on the base and attached to it. The pedestal closure assembly, when assembled and installed, should have sufficient structural strength to resist minor impacts as well as to resist environmental conditions such as wind, rain and blowing contaminants.

[0009] Examples of such pedestals may be found in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,384,427; 5,412,960; 6,182,846; 6,198,041; 6,244,635 and 6,598,949, all of which are owned by the assignee of the present application. The disclosures of the above mentioned patents are included herein by reference.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] Improvements in the above mentioned pedestals are always desirable. What is described here is a pedestal closure assembly comprising a substantially monolithic upper dome and a two-sectioned base for attaching to the dome. Each section of the base includes inner and outer ribs for stabilizing the pedestal in the ground.

[0011] There are a number of advantages, features and objects achieved with the present invention which are believed not to be available in earlier related devices. The pedestal disclosed here is easy and quick to install in the ground and once installed, has good stability. The pedestal does not pull out easily nor easily tilt away from a vertical position. The pedestal also is easy to open and close to facilitate service. There is only one lock mechanism to open (referred to as "one point of entry") where a technician need only twist a lock one quarter turn or about 90 degrees with a lock opening tool to gain entry. Nevertheless, the pedestal disclosed here provides good closure security and is strong, relatively inexpensive and very reliable. A further advantage is that the lock/dome combination may be moved past wires and cables without snagging.

[0012] A more complete understanding of the present invention and other objects, advantages and features thereof will be gained from a consideration of the following description of preferred embodiments read in conjunction with the accompanying drawing provided herein. The preferred embodiments disclosed represent examples of the invention which are described here in compliance with Title 35 U.S.C. section 112 (first paragraph), but the invention itself is defined by the attached claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING

[0013] **FIG. 1** is an isometric view of a pedestal closure assembly embodiment disclosed herein having a dome and a short base.

[0014] **FIG. 2** is an exploded isometric view of the pedestal closure assembly having a spade base and also illustrating an internally attached mounting plate.

[0015] **FIG. 3** is a front elevation view of the pedestal closure assembly shown in **FIG. 2**.

[0016] **FIG. 4** is a side elevation view of the pedestal closure assembly shown in **FIGS. 2 and 3**.

[0017] **FIG. 5** is a rear elevation view of the pedestal closure assembly shown in **FIGS. 2-4**.

[0018] **FIG. 6** is a top plan view of the base portion of the pedestal closure assembly shown in **FIGS. 2-5** and of the attached mounting plate.

[0019] **FIG. 7** is an enlarged front isometric view of the dome part of the pedestal closure assembly shown in **FIGS. 1-5**.

[0020] **FIG. 8** is a rear isometric view of the dome shown in **FIG. 7**.

[0021] **FIG. 9** is a rear upside down isometric view of the dome shown in **FIGS. 7 and 8**.

[0022] **FIG. 10** is a bottom plan view of the dome shown in **FIGS. 7-9**.

[0023] **FIG. 11** is a sectional elevation view of the dome taken along line **11-11** of **FIG. 10**.

[0024] **FIG. 12** is an enlarged view taken within the circle **12-12** of **FIG. 10**.

[0025] **FIG. 13** is a front isometric view of a front section of the base of the pedestal closure assembly.

[0026] **FIG. 14** is a rear isometric view of the front section of the base shown in **FIG. 13**.

[0027] **FIG. 15** is an upside down rear isometric view of the front section of the base shown in **FIGS. 13 and 14**.

[0028] **FIG. 16** is a rear elevation view of the front section of the base shown in **FIGS. 13-15**.

[0029] **FIG. 17** is a sectional view taken along line **17-17** of **FIG. 16**.

[0030] **FIG. 18** is a top plan view of the front section of the base shown in **FIGS. 13-15**.

[0031] **FIG. 19** is a section view taken along line **19-19** of **FIG. 16**.

[0032] **FIG. 20** is a front isometric view of the rear section of the base.

[0033] **FIG. 21** is a rear isometric view of the rear section of the base shown in **FIG. 20**.

[0034] **FIG. 22** is an upside down rear isometric view of the rear section of the base shown in **FIGS. 20 and 21**.

[0035] **FIG. 23** is a front elevation view of the rear section of the base shown in **FIGS. 20-22**.

[0036] **FIG. 24** is a bottom plan view of the rear section of the base shown in **FIGS. 20-23**.

[0037] **FIG. 25** is a sectional plan view taken along line **25-25** of **FIG. 23**.

[0038] **FIG. 26** is a sectional plan view taken along line **26-26** of **FIG. 23**.

[0039] **FIG. 27** is a sectional elevation view taken along line **27-27** of **FIG. 23**.

[0040] **FIG. 28** is a side elevation view of the short version of the rear section of the base.

[0041] **FIG. 29** is an enlarged front isometric view of a slide lock.

[0042] **FIG. 30** is a rear isometric view of the slide lock assembly shown in **FIG. 29**.

[0043] **FIG. 31** is a front elevation view of the slide lock assembly shown in **FIGS. 29 and 30**.

[0044] **FIG. 32** is a sectional plan view taken along line **32-32** of **FIG. 31**.

[0045] **FIG. 33** is a sectional elevation view taken along line **33-33** of **FIG. 31**.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[0046] While the present invention is open to various modifications and alternative constructions, the preferred embodiments shown in the various figures of the drawing will be described herein in detail. It is understood, however, that there is no intention to limit the invention to the particular embodiments, forms or examples which are disclosed here. On the contrary, the intention is to cover all modifications, equivalent structures and methods, and alternative constructions falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as expressed in the appended claims, pursuant to Title 35 U.S.C. section 112 (second paragraph).

[0047] Referring now to **FIG. 1**, there is illustrated a pedestal closure assembly **10** showing an embodiment with a cover or dome part **12** and a base part **14**. In the **FIG. 1** embodiment, the base is a short version. In **FIGS. 2-5**, a second embodiment of the base part **18** is illustrated where the dome **12** is identical to the dome shown in **FIG. 1** but the base part **20** has an extension or spade **22** integrally molded with the remainder of the base and extending downwardly.

[0048] Attached to the base for mounting in the interior of the pedestal assembly is a mounting plate **24**. The mounting plate allows wires from an underground cable to be attached to connectors which are supported by the mounting plate. Underground cables are received by the pedestal closure assembly from below the pedestal. In normal usage, the pedestal is anchored in the ground to approximately the level shown by front and rear "ground lines"**26**, **28**.

[0049] More detail of similar pedestals and their operation may be acquired by reference to the four above mentioned patents.

[0050] Referring now to **FIGS. 1-9**, the dome **12** includes a front wall **30**, left and right side walls **32**, **34**, a rear wall **36** and a top wall **38**. The dome includes interior surfaces, such as the surface **40**, **FIG. 9**, and an internal chamber **42** formed by the front, rear, side and top walls. At the lower end portion **43** of the front wall is a bulge **44** to accommodate a lock mechanism as will be described below in relation to **FIGS. 29-36**. The bottom **46** of the dome is open and it is intended that the dome be received in a telescoping fashion by the base.

[0051] At the bulge **44** three openings **50**, **52**, **54** are formed in vertical alignment, two small openings **50**, **54** for rivets to attach the lock to the dome, and a central opening **52** for insertion of a lock tool to rotate the lock mechanism through **90** degrees to "unlock" the dome from the base and allow removal of the dome for service of the equipment within the pedestal or for replacement of the dome should it be damaged.

[0052] It is to be noted that above the three openings, the dome is a single molded piece. This is important to operation in the field. It is desirable that the dome perform as a "bell jar" in flood situations. By bell jar, it is meant that water rising from beneath the dome will cause an increasing air pressure in the upper portion of the dome above the water level. This has the effect of suppressing the rising water to keep the water away from the electrical wires and connectors inside the pedestal.

[0053] The dome is formed of a suitable synthetic resin, such as high density polyethylene, and has a normal wall thickness of 0.180 inches generally and about 0.200 inches at the bulge.

[0054] Referring now to **FIGS. 10-12**, the dome has two oppositely disposed vertically extending ribs **60**, **62** projecting outwardly from the inner surfaces of the dome into the chamber formed by the dome. The vertical ribs start about one inch from the bottom **46** of the dome. As will be

explained, these ribs engage with corresponding slots formed in the base thereby securing the rear of the dome to the base while the lock secures the front of the dome to the base.

[0055] The dome includes a front interior surface **66**, a left side interior surface **40**, a right side interior surface **68** and a rear interior surface **70**. The lock bulge **44** is formed in the front wall and the lock will attach to the front interior surface **66**. The lock mechanism has a thickness generally matching the extent of the bulge so that the lock mechanism does not extend in any substantial way into the internal chamber formed by the dome. This facilitates moving the dome past the mounting plate **24** when wires and connectors are attached to the mounting plate and not causing a "catch" or snag. The lock ribs **60**, **62** are formed along the left and right side interior surfaces **40**, **68** near the rear interior surface **70**. The ribs provide for an engagement between the dome and the base at the rear of the assembly to complement an abutment between the lock mechanism and the base at the front of the assembly. This ensures good security. The vertical ribs and slots also provide an alignment feature when placing the dome over the base and the ribs act to strengthen the dome and make it more robust.

[0056] Integrally formed with the dome is a small tab **72** which is used to key the location of the lock mechanism and facilitate assembly of the lock mechanism and the dome.

[0057] It is now apparent that above the three aligned openings **50**, **52**, **54** for mounting the lock mechanism, there are no further openings in the dome at an elevation above the three openings, thereby allowing the "bell jar" effect to be accomplished. Also, as is now apparent, the dome is strong and relatively inexpensive since the dome is molded as one piece, and the dome and lock mechanism will provide good security.

[0058] Each base **14**, **20** is known as a split base and includes a front or cover section and a rear section. Referring now to **FIGS. 13-15**, the base cover section **80** is illustrated and is the same for both the **FIG. 1** and the **FIG. 2** embodiments. The cover section includes an upper portion **82** of smaller dimensions to receive the dome in a telescoping fashion and a lower portion **84** of larger dimensions, most of which portion is to be placed below ground level in use. The upper portion includes a front wall **85**, a locking rib **86** in the configuration of an "E" extending from the front wall and an alignment flange **88**, also extending from the front wall. The alignment flange ensures alignment of the lock body when the dome and base are being secured. The E rib provides with the lock an interference fit as will be explained below.

[0059] The lower portion **84** of the base cover section includes a front wall **90**, a left side wall **92** and a right side wall **94**. Integral with an outer surface **96** of the front and side walls are three horizontally disposed ribs, an upper rib **98**, a middle rib **100** and a lower rib **102**. The ribs extend generally in a continuous fashion around the cover section of the base. Four vertical ribs **106**,**108**,**110**,**112** are integral with the horizontal ribs and the first vertical rib **106** extends from the right side wall, the second vertical rib **108** extends from the left side wall **92** and two vertical ribs **110**, **112** extend from the front wall **90**.

[0060] Integral with the inner surfaces **116**,**118** of the side walls are two horizontally disposed ribs **120**,**122** that are located elevationally about the same level as the outer upper rib **98** and the middle rib **100**. Also molded integrally with the base cover section are two curved walls **124**,**126** which form with the inner surface of the front wall an internal wire channel. The channel allows underground wires or cables to be inserted through a front opening **130** and extended within the channel upwardly in the pedestal assembly. The wall thickness of the base is a nominal 0.180 inches and the material is high density polyethylene.

[0061] The wire channel is shown in **FIGS. 16-19** as are the inner and outer horizontal ribs. The base cover section also includes vertical flanges **132**, **134**, **FIG. 14**, that extend away from the side walls so as to engage with the rear section of the base. Openings **136**,**138** are provided as are fasteners **140**,**142**.

[0062] Referring now to **FIGS. 20-22**, the rear base section **144** of the base **20**, including the spade or scoop **22** shown in **FIGS. 2-5**, is illustrated in greater detail. The rear base section includes an upper portion **150** having a left side wall **152**, a right side wall **154** and a rear wall **156**. Each side wall includes a slot **158**,**160** for receiving the pair of internal, vertically extending ribs **60**, **62**, **FIGS. 10 and 11**, of the dome. The upper portion also includes a pair of channel structures **162**,**164** for attaching the mounting plate **24**, **FIG. 2**.

[0063] A lower portion **168** of the rear base section **144** includes a left wall **170**, a right wall **172** and a rear wall **174**. Integral with outer surfaces **176**,**178**,**180** of the side and rear walls are a set of three horizontally spaced ribs **182**,**184**,**186** and four vertically spaced ribs **190**, **192**,**194**,**196**. Integrally formed with the walls but extending from interior surfaces **200**, **202**, **204** are three spaced horizontal ribs **206**, **208**, **210** and two attached vertical ribs **212**, **214**, **FIG. 23**. As illustrated, the horizontal and vertical ribs extending from the outer surfaces of the walls of the rear base section are formed into box-like structures to enhance strength and resistance to ground extraction. The three outer horizontal ribs include the upper rib **182**, the middle rib **184** and the lower rib **186**. The same is true for the three interior ribs, the upper rib **206**, the middle rib **208** and the lower rib **210**.

[0064] The inner and outer ribs are also shown in **FIGS. 23-27** along with a horizontal step **220** and three supporting vertical flanges **222**, **224**, **226** extending from the rear surface **178** of the downwardly projecting spade portion of the rear base section.

[0065] The side walls **170**, **172** also include two pairs of slots **230**, **232** and **234**, **236**, **FIG. 20**, for receiving connectors that are used on the cover base section or added after the cover and rear base sections are brought together.

[0066] Referring now to **FIG. 28**, the short variation **240** of the base section is illustrated along with one slot **242** of a pair of slots in the upper portion **244** for receiving the vertical ribs **60**, **62**, **FIG. 11**, of the dome. The short version of the base also includes the same geometric pattern of outer, horizontal and vertical ribs **250**, **252**, **254** and **256**, **258**. Although not shown, the short version also includes three inner horizontal ribs and two vertical ribs, as shown and described in relation to the embodiment shown in **FIGS. 20-27**.

[0067] Referring now to **FIGS. 29-36**, there is illustrated a preferred embodiment of a lock mechanism **270**. As is

explained in more detail in co-pending application Ser. No. 10/712,226 filed on Nov. 13, 2003 and owned by the assignee of the present invention, the lock includes a base **272**, a cover **274**, a slider **276**, a rotator **278** and two compression springs **277**, **279**.

[**0068**] The base **272** includes an outside surface having two slanted end panels **290**, **292**, two slanted sides **294**, **296** and a grill-like top **298**. The end panels are slanted at about 40-45 degrees from a horizontal reference and the sides are slanted at about 30-35 degrees from a horizontal reference and all intersections are rounded as shown. The base also includes a rear wall **300** and a slider channel formed by the rear wall, two spaced apart lateral walls **302**, **304** and a base side wall **306**. The base also includes two spring guides **307**, **308**, four snap openings **310**, **312**, **314**, **316** and two rivet receiving openings **318**, **320**. A hole **322** is formed in the base wall **306** for the rotator. The base further includes a key groove **324**, a pair of drain ports **326**, **328** in the lateral wall **302** and another pair of drain ports **330**, **332** in the bottom end **334** of the base.

[**0069**] The cover includes a key groove **340** along its upper edge. The key grooves **324**, **340** of the base and the cover mate with the key tab **72**, **FIG. 11**, formed in the dome. This allows the lock to be correctly and quickly aligned in and assembled with the dome. Two aligned openings **342**, **344** are formed in the cover and these align themselves with the opening **318**, **320** in the lock base and the two small openings **50**, **54**, **FIG. 7**, in the dome **12**. The aligned openings allow rivets to be attached to the dome and to the lock so as to fasten the lock to the dome. The cover also includes a large central opening **345**, a surrounding security ring **346** to prevent tampering and four snap arms **347**, **348**, **349**, **350**.

[**0070**] The rotator **278** has a hex shaped head **351** as shown in **FIG. 29**. The hex head extends through the central opening **345** in the cover. The security ring around the head formed integral with the cover prevents a typical household tool, such as pliers, or a wrench from effectively engaging the hex head. This arrangement makes the hex head accessible only to a specially constructed opening tool. The rotator **278** also includes a cylindrical body **352** and a cam arm **354**.

[**0071**] The slider **276** includes outer slide walls **360**, **362**, an end wall **364** and an outer cam follower wall **366**. The slider also has a base wall **368** with a slot opening **370** to receive the rotator, an inner cam follower wall **372** and two limit tabs **374**, **376**. When the hex head of the rotator is rotated a quarter turn or about ninety degrees, the cam arm **354** bears against the inner cam follower wall **372** of the slider and thereby retracts the slider to the left, when viewed as in **FIG. 36**, from its extended position shown in **FIG. 35**. Moving the slider to the left compresses the two springs and creates a sufficient rightward biasing force to return the slider to its extended position when the opening tool is removed. In a similar fashion, when the dome and lock are brought together with the pedestal base, the E rib **86**, **FIG. 13**, acts as a cam to bear against the outer cam follower wall **366** of the slider causing it to retract until the slider passes the E-rib. Once passed, the springs bias the slider to its extended position to cause an interference fit between the E-rib and the slider wall **360**.

[**0072**] It is noted that the slanted outer surfaces **290**, **292**, **293**, **296** of the lock mechanism which extend into the interior of the pedestal closure assembly do not snag wires situated there as the dome is moved relative to the pedestal base during dome removal or installation. This is because there are no sharp corners and because the lock mechanism is located in the bulge of the dome.

[**0073**] The purpose of the outer and inner ribs on the pedestal base is to provide greater stability to the pedestal closure assembly when it is installed in the ground. Customers of such pedestals prefer to excavate shallow pits in which pedestal assemblies are then installed. For example, the short or shallow pedestal embodiment shown in **FIG. 1** may be situated in a hole dug to a depth of only about ten inches. The pedestal is then positioned and earth or sand or other ground medium is used to compact around the base both outside and inside. It has been found that a spacing of about three and one half inches between horizontal ribs gives good results against easy pullout from the ground. The width of each rib is approximately one inch. The spacing of the inner ribs is analogous to that of the outer ribs and the inner ribs are a little less than an inch in width.

[**0074**] When the spade version of the pedestal is used, ground stability is improved but the spade is not essential to the proper functioning of the pedestal. Also, openings, **380**, **382**, **FIG. 1**, are provided to attach a metal stake which may be used to enhance ground stability of a short base pedestal. Once again, however, there is no requirement that a stake be used.

[**0075**] The internal vertical ribs of the dome and the slots in the pedestal base provide for an inner lock along the rear of the pedestal. In combination with the lock mechanism at the front of the pedestal, a strong, secure arrangement is provided for attachment of the dome to the pedestal base.

[**0076**] While a strong all around attachment is made, a technician need only use a special tool with the lock mechanism and rotate the tool ninety degrees to cause the lock to disengage and allow the removal of the dome from the pedestal base. Thus, a technician need only go to a single point to allow disengagement of the dome. Furthermore, the technician need only use a single tool and a simple ninety degree twist for the unlocking step. To reassemble the dome with the pedestal base, a technician merely aligns the ribs of the dome and the slots of the base and pushes downwardly. The slider of the lock will be retracted by the camming action of the E rib and will automatically snap into a locking position once the E rib has been passed.

[**0077**] In operation the pedestal is installed over an underground cable and is typically buried in the ground to about ten inches not including a spike or the spade version of the pedestal. Because of the outer and inner ribs around the pedestal base, a relatively shallow hole or pit need be dug. This is a time and labor saving advantage for the pedestal of the present application. Once the pedestal is placed in the ground, soil, sand or the like is compacted around the pedestal to ensure that the pedestal remains upright. Because of the ribs, great stability in the ground is achieved.

[**0078**] After installation in the ground, the pedestal may be easily opened for service. To gain access to the cables, wires, connectors and the like that are housed within the pedestal, a technician need only place a tool on the hex head rotator of the slide lock and twist the hex head a quarter turn. This retracts the slider of the lock away from abutting

engagement with the E rib on the pedestal base so that the dome may be raised upwardly and away from the base. After completion of service, the dome may be replaced on the pedestal base simply by aligning the vertical ribs of the dome with the slots in the base and pushing downwardly so that the E rib cams the slider of the lock to a retracted position. When the E rib has been passed by the lock, the slider automatically extends so as to create an interference abutment thereby locking the dome to the base.

[0079] The above specification describes in detail two preferred embodiments of the present invention. Other examples, embodiments, modifications and variations will, under both the literal claim language and the doctrine of equivalents, come within the scope of the invention defined by the appended claims. For example, slightly different shapes for the dome and pedestal base or the lock and E rib are still considered equivalent structures and will also come within the literal language of the claims. Still other alternatives will also be equivalent as will many new technologies. There is no desire or intention here to limit in any way the application of the doctrine of equivalents nor to limit or restrict the scope of the invention.

1-29. (canceled)

30. An outdoor pedestal closure assembly with flood protection, the assembly comprising:

a dome having an upper portion and a lower portion, the dome configured to provide a bell jar effect within said upper portion when water rises above said lower portion;

a base for supporting the dome, the dome configured for concealing and protecting cables or equipment when the cables or equipment are positioned in the upper portion of the dome with the dome secured to the base; and

a lock positioned on the lower portion of the dome for securing the dome to the base;

wherein the dome is configured for removal from the base for servicing said cables or equipment by unlocking the lock and separating the dome from the base; and

wherein the lock is configured to automatically lock the dome to the base when the dome is replaced on the base.

31. The assembly of claim 30 wherein the lock is configured to be unlocked via a single tool.

32. The assembly of claim 30 wherein said lock is the only lock for securing the dome to the base.

33. The assembly of claim 30 wherein said lock represents the only point of entry for the pedestal assembly.

34. The assembly of claim 33 wherein the dome is configured for removal from the base solely by unlocking the lock via the single tool and separating the dome from the base.

35. The assembly of claim 30 wherein at least the upper portion of the dome has a substantially monolithic construction.

36. The assembly of claim 35 wherein the dome includes a plurality of openings on the lower portion, and wherein the dome is a single molded piece at least above said openings.

37. The assembly of claim 30 further comprising a mounting plate attached to the base for supporting said cables or equipment, wherein the upper portion of the dome conceals and protects the mounting plate when the dome is secured to the base.

38. The assembly of claim 30 wherein the base includes at least two separable sections.

39. The assembly of claim 30 wherein the base includes a plurality of ribs for resisting ground extraction after the pedestal assembly is installed in the ground.

40. The assembly of claim 30 wherein the dome includes at least one rib, the base includes at least one slot, and the rib on the dome is configured to engage the slot on the base.

41. The assembly of claim 30 wherein the lower portion of the dome includes a bulge, and wherein the lock is positioned in the bulge of said lower portion.

42. The assembly of claim 41 wherein the lock has a thickness generally matching the bulge.

43. The assembly of claim 30 wherein the lock is configured to be unlocked by rotating a portion of the lock approximately a quarter turn.

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