A toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser promotes sanitary cleanliness in private and public restrooms while providing a new packaging format to the industry concept. The wet and dry toilet paper wipe offers the consumer the cleaning agent of the wet wipe, while also supplying the consumer with the comforting feeling of a dry wipe consumers have grown accustomed to, all within a single product. The wet wipe dispenser preferably fits on a standard toilet paper roll hanger. A cover on the wet wipe dispenser preferably seals the compartment containing the wet wipes to prevent the wet wipes from drying out. A toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser, a dispenser with dual openings for a wet wipe and a dry toilet paper product and a wet and dry wipe, utilizing a single opening, are all disclosed.
TOILET PAPER STYLED WET WIPE DISPENSER AND WET AND DRY WIpes

REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims one or more inventions which were disclosed in Provisional Application No. 61/538, 514, filed Sep. 23, 2011, entitled "TOILET PAPER STYLED WET WIPE CONTAINER". The benefit under 35 USC §119 (e) of the United States provisional application is hereby claimed, and the aforementioned application is hereby incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The invention pertains to the field of sanitation. More particularly, the invention pertains to toilet paper and flushable wet wipes.

[0004] 2. Description of Related Art

[0005] Conventional sanitation products, such as toilet paper, wet wipes and the like, are typically marketed to two different consumers or industries. Wet wipes are typically marketed for use with infants or babies in the household cleaning department and come in distribution formats such as in square or rectangular bags, plastic boxes, or containers. It is not an uncommon experience to realize the packaging format of the wet wipes does not allow for a convenient hanging or storing of the product to be used next to a standard toilet bowl. While dry toilet paper is typically marketed to the average adult and youth consumer, it offers less probability of supplying the consumer with a product that offers the utmost in cleanliness as dry toilet paper products often leave debris behind. Further, while toilet paper offers the convenience of hanging and storing the roll, it does not supply the user with the same cleanliness a wet wipe can offer.

[0006] Research conducted by Kimberly-Clark shows that consumers agree that moist methods clean and freshen better than dry toilet paper alone. The results of a recent Kimberly-Clark survey showed that 63% of respondents have used a moist cleansing method after using the restroom, and one out of four use a moist cleansing method on a daily basis. Recently, wet wipes have started appearing next to the toilet paper section of distributing stores, mainly populated by two main products Charmin Fresh Mates Rolls, which is distributed in a rectangular, plastic box and Cottonelle Fresh Roll-wipes, which is distributed in a plastic dispenser, although the consumer needs to replace their whole toilet paper dispenser/hanger in order to utilize the Cottonelle Fresh Roll-wipes product. The new market for wet wipes has yet to provide a convenient hanging and storing option to the consumer.

[0007] It is known in prior art to provide a specific useful purpose to the design of a wet wipe container for convenience and quality control.

[0008] Similarly, U.S. Patent App. Pub. No. 2003/0218040, entitled "Method for Storing and Dispensing Wet Wipes" by Faulks et al. and published Nov. 27, 2003, provides a method for storing and dispensing wet wipes, including a dispenser and a plurality of releasably connected wet wipes. The dispenser includes a sealable chamber. The chamber is configured to loosely retain the plurality of releasably connected wet wipes such that the plurality of releasably connected wet wipes can move axially, laterally, and longitudinally relative to an inside perimeter of the sealable chamber. The wet wipe box sits above a holder used for dry toilet paper and in order to use the device a user must completely replace the toilet paper roll holder with a new dispenser.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] A toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser promotes sanitary cleanliness in private and public restrooms while providing a new packaging format to the industry concept. The wet and dry toilet paper wipes offer the consumer the cleaning agent of the wet wipe, while also supplying the consumer with the comforting feeling of a dry wipe consumers have grown accustomed to, all within a single product. The wet wipe dispenser preferably fits on a standard toilet paper roll hanger. A cover on the wet wipe dispenser preferably seals the compartment containing the wet wipes to prevent the wet wipes from drying out. A toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser, a dispenser with dual openings for a wet wipe and a dry toilet paper product and a wet and dry wipe, utilizing a single opening, are all disclosed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser with a flap cover in an embodiment of the present invention.

[0011] FIG. 2 is an end view of the dispenser of FIG. 1.

[0012] FIG. 3 is an exploded perspective view of the dispenser of FIG. 1.

[0013] FIG. 4 is an exploded end view of the dispenser of FIG. 1 with stops.

[0014] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of an octagonally-shaped toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser in an embodiment of the present invention.

[0015] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser with a sliding cover in a closed position in an embodiment of the present invention.

[0016] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the dispenser of FIG. 6 with the sliding cover in an open position.

[0017] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the dispenser of FIG. 6 mounted on a conventional toilet paper holder.

[0018] FIG. 9 shows an exploded end view of a dual-compartment dry wipe/wet wipe dispenser in an embodiment of the present invention.

[0019] FIG. 10 shows a wet and dry toilet paper wipe in an embodiment of the present invention.

[0020] FIG. 11 shows another wet and dry toilet paper wipe in an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0021] The toilet paper-styled wet wipe dispenser preferably fits on a standard toilet paper roll holder. The wet wipes are rolled in a circular or spool-like motion with the internal circumference allowing for the holder to pass through by creating a passageway. The central circumference of the cover has a circular or multi-shaped pattern made in such a manner that it enables the cover to fit conveniently on a standard toilet paper roll holder. In some embodiments, the center passageway for where the product hangs on the holder includes a rubber part or something similar, which creates a tighter passageway for the center holder and enables a tighter fit, which maintains the stability of the dispenser. This central rubber piece or the like, insures that the dispenser does not rotate around the holder too easily. The container has an outside cover, which may be made of one or multiple matte-
rials, including, but not limited to, plastic, metal, magnetic metal, wood, bamboo, or rubber, that creates an environment to maintain the moisture of the wet wipe or wet and dry wipe product. The cover allows for a point of exit for the wet wipe for distribution of product to the consumer. In some embodiments, the exit point has a hinged cover with a sealing mechanism. In other embodiments, the exit point has a sliding cover with a sealing mechanism. In some embodiments, the sealing mechanism is a magnetic strip.

[0022] The wet wipes, separate compartment wet and dry wipe or the singular compartment wet and dry wipe may be coiled, folded, or rolled within the dispenser prior to being dispensed. The wet wipes are either perforated or supplied as single sheets for the management of how much of the product is dispensed. For the wet wipe version, any wet wipe material may be used within the spirit of the present invention, including any wet wipe product that is commercially available. The wet and dry wipe version that utilizes multiple compartments and multiple exit points within the dispenser, the wet and dry product, such as, but not limited to, wet and dry toilet paper wipes, is preferably distributed within a single dispenser. For the wet and dry, singular compartment and singular wipe, such as one side of wipe wet and one side of wipe dry, at least the following designs of the wet and dry wipe itself are novel and believed to not be commercially available. The wet and dry singular wipe version has a barrier material between the two layers to maintain the integrity of both sides or the alternating pattern of the wet and dry materials. The barrier material may be, but is not limited to, a corn husk material or flushable cardboard material. The barrier may be constituted by any material that can be utilized to maintain the properties of one portion of the wipe to be wet and another portion of the wipe to be dry. The dispenser and wipes promote sanitary cleanliness in private and public restrooms while providing a new packaging and industry concept. In some embodiments, the wet wipe dispenser can be stored and hung conveniently on a toilet paper hanger dispenser the consumer may already have in their private household restroom.

[0023] Referring now to FIG. 1 and FIG. 2, the toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 10 has a substantially circular profile 12, with a point of exit for distribution of the wet wipe, namely an opening 14, and a cover flap 16 for closure, with a sealing mechanism such as, but not limited to, a magnetic strip 18 attached to the underside of the cover flap 16 or a magnetic strip 19 attached to the container 20 around the opening 14. A hinge 22 on one edge of the cover flap 16 allows the cover flap 16 to pivot between an open and a closed position. The container 20 includes an opening 24 through the center of the roll of wipes or spool-like design to allow for a standard toilet paper roll holder to be put through in order to hang the product from a standard toilet paper roll holder or hanger. The opening preferably has a diameter in the range of 1/2 to 2 inches. The central platform or spool-like central interior wall 26 is in the center of the design of sufficient bulk and weight to stabilize the roll of wipes. Teeth 28 around the opening 14 prevent the end of the wet wipes from falling back into the dispenser when a user takes a wet wipe from the dispenser 10.

[0024] In further detail, still referring to the embodiment of FIG. 1 and FIG. 2, the toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 10 is sufficiently wide and long and with an interior capacity to conveniently hold the wet wipe roll for protection and easy distribution. The depth is preferably in the range of 4 to 5 inches. The width is preferably in the range of about 4 to 6 inches. In a preferred embodiment, the depth is about 4.5 inches and the width is about 4.5 inches. The wet wipe material to be dispensed from the cover may be of various sizes, shapes, thicknesses, wetness, or ingredients within the spirit of the present invention.

[0025] The embodiment shown in FIG. 1 and FIG. 2 may be made of plastic, metal, wood, or any other sufficiently rigid and strong material, including, but not limited to, high-strength flexible plastic and magnetic metal. Further, the various components of the toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 10 may be made of different materials.

[0026] Referring now to FIG. 3 and FIG. 4, the toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 10 has at least one removable end 60 to provide a side opening 54 for the filling and re-filling of the wet wipe product into the dispenser 10. The interior wall 26 is more clearly visible in FIG. 3, having a capacity to contain and hold the wet wipe roll in a substantially level position by the design and shape of the dispenser 10. A distribution mechanism 52 holds the next wet wipe in a distribution position. Any distribution mechanism known in the art may be used within the spirit of the present invention. In some embodiments, the distribution mechanism is made of plastic and spring-shaped metals. In some embodiments, the distribution mechanism is a pre-distribution volume to hold the next wet wipe to be distributed. In some embodiments, the distribution mechanism includes a first gripping structure at the distribution opening 14 and a second gripping structure behind the distribution opening 14 to maintain the next wet wipe. In some embodiments, the gripping structures are teeth.

[0027] The distribution opening 14 and exit point for the wet wipe material are held in a substantially level position crossing along the width of the dispenser 10. The opening 14 has a cover flap 16 that opens and closes over the opening 14 to seal the dispenser 10 in order to protect the integrity and moistness of the wet wipe. The cover flap 16 moves with a hinge 22. The hinge may be made of one or more materials, including, but not limited to, metal, plastic, and wood. To allow for the movement of the cover flap 16, a sealing mechanism, including, but not limited to, a magnetic strip 18 is attached to the underside of the cover flap 16 or a magnetic strip 19 is attached to the container 20. The side opening 14 has a side cover 16 to seal the toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 10. The container 20 has two sides 60 and 62, one or both of which may be removable or may be solid walls attaching to the container 20 or the interior wall 26 of the spool-like design structure. The toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 10 as shown in FIG. 4 includes a circular interior design enabling product hanging capability by creating a passageway 24 for a standard toilet paper roll hanger or holder to pass through.

[0028] In some embodiments, a stop 46 mounted in the passageway 24 provides a tight fit to limit or prevent the dispenser 10 from rotating with respect to the toilet paper roll holder dowel as shown in FIG. 4. In some embodiments, a stop 48 mounted to the container 20 provides a tight fit between the container 20 and the wall or the back surface of the toilet paper roll holder to limit or prevent the dispenser from rotating with respect to the base of the toilet paper roll holder. The stops are preferably made of a high friction flexible material that can be pressed against the toilet paper roll holder surfaces and that is resistant to sliding on those surfaces. In some embodiments, the stops are made of rubber.
The toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 110 of FIG. 5 has a non-cylindrical shape with a non-circular profile. In FIG. 6, the profile of the non-cylindrical shape is an octagon. The outer perimeter 112 and the opening 124 formed by the central interior wall 126 both have the shape of the octagon. The cover flap 116 is substantially flat and rotates on a hinge 122 to provide access to the opening 114 in the container 120. Alternatively, the cover flap 116 may be bent to span across an edge of the octagon, with the opening 114 being at or near an edge of the octagon rather than on one of the faces. In other embodiments, the non-circular profile may be triangular, rectangular, square, pentagonal, hexagonal, heptagonal, nonagonal, or decagonal. In other embodiments, the non-circular profile may be oval or elliptical.

The central interior wall 126 is in the center of the design and of sufficient bulk and weight to stabilize the roll of wipes. In some embodiments, the octagon shaped profile 112 has a width of about 4.5 inches. At least one end 160 is preferably removable and attachable with a tight seal to the spool-like design structure. The container 120 may be made of any sufficiently rigid and strong material, including, but not limited to, plastic, metal, wood, high-strength flexible plastic, or magnetic metal. Further, the various components of the toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 110 may be made of multiple different materials.

In more detail, still referring to the embodiment of FIG. 1 through FIG. 5, the toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 10, 110 as shown includes a circular or multi-shaped passageway 24, 124 interior design enabling product hanging capability by creating a passageway along the interior wall 26, 126.

Referring now to FIG. 6, FIG. 7, and FIG. 8, the toilet paper styled wet wipe dispenser 210 has an opening 214 for the distribution of wet wipes and has a sliding door closure 216 to seal the container in order to protect the integrity and moistness of the wet wipe. This sliding door mechanism is preferably made out of one or more materials, including, but not limited to, metal, plastic, and wood. This dispenser 210 does not require a dispensing mechanism with an internal piece to help with keeping the wet wipe material 232 close to the opening 214 after tearing off the last used section. The dispenser 210 is easily mountable onto a conventional toilet paper roll holder 298, as shown in FIG. 8.

This dispenser preferably has two ends that are not removable from the container 220, thereby creating a tight seal to the spool-like structure. The sliding door closure 216 extends around the ends of the container 220 and into the opening 224 formed by the central interior wall 226. At least one end 260 includes a circular groove 234, which serves as a track into which an extension on the back side of the sliding door enclosure 216 extends. An indentation 236 in at least one end 260 receives another extension on the back side of the sliding door closure 216 to hold the sliding door closure 216 in an open position, as shown in FIG. 7. A biasing mechanism preferably biases the sliding door closure 216 toward a closed position. In some embodiments, the biasing mechanism is a spring mechanism.

Although specific cover designs are shown in the drawings, other cover designs may be used within the spirit of the present invention. The cover seals in the moisture of the wet wipe material and creates a sealed dispenser unit. In some embodiments, the cover slides around the outer housing in order to open and close. In other embodiments, the cover is a flap or has a hinged attachment to the outer housing.

In some embodiments, a holding mechanism or dispensing mechanism holds the dispensed end of the wet wipe in place near the opening and prevents the wet wipe from falling back internally into the unit and making it hard for the user to reach. In some embodiments, teeth at the cover opening provide this function.

In some embodiments, the dispenser is designed with two internal compartments as shown in FIG. 9. A first internal compartment 370 contains the wet wipes and a second internal compartment 372 houses a standard dry toilet paper roll product. A compartment wall 374 separates the two internal compartments 370, 372. In some such embodiments, the dispenser 310 includes a pull-out and a hinged closure 318 permits one or both products to be dispensed. In other embodiments, a hinged closure 318 permits one or both products to be dispensed. At least one central interior wall extends through the dispenser. In the shown embodiment, a central interior wall 326 extends through the first compartment 370, and a second central interior wall 327 extends through the second compartment 372. The dispenser 310 may be hung on a standard toilet paper roll holder by either the first opening 324 or the second opening 325. The internal compartments 370, 372 may each have a distribution mechanism 352, 353 at or near the opening 314, 315. Although the wet and dry toilet paper wipe dispenser provides additional convenience to the user, the dispenser may not be able to hold as many wipes as a wet toilet paper roll only dispenser.

In some embodiments, the dispensed product includes a wet and dry toilet paper wipe. The wet portion and the dry portion may be associated and coil internally in one of a number of different ways. In some embodiments, the wet toilet paper and the dry toilet paper are on separate coils. In other embodiments, the wet toilet paper 480 and the dry toilet paper 482 are on a single roll 410 on separate rolls separated by a moisture barrier layer 484 between the two rolls as shown in FIG. 10. In some such embodiments, the dispenser may be a single compartment dispenser, such as those shown in FIG. 1 through FIG. 8 except that the dispenser has two dispending openings, one for wet wipes and one for dry wipes, such as in FIG. 9. In other embodiments, the wet and dry toilet paper wipe 510 is on a single roll with alternating sections of wet toilet paper 580 and dry toilet paper 582 as shown in FIG. 11. In some embodiments, the alternating sections are about six to eighteen inches in length. In a preferred embodiment, the alternating sections is about one foot in length. In some embodiments, the dispenser includes a compartment within the dispenser to hold paper waste, including, but not limited to, a moisture barrier or a covering on the wipes to keep the wet wipes wet and to keep the dry wipes dry. In some embodiments, the covering may be removed as it is pulled through the teeth or grooved opening of the dispenser.

Any type of barrier capable of maintaining the integrity of each of the sides may be used within the spirit of the present invention. In one embodiment, a corn husk-like material is used.

Advantages may include, but are not limited to, the container storing and hanging conveniently while protecting the wet wipe material from dehydration with a design that dispenses the wet wipes easily, thereby enabling and promot-
ing sanitary cleanliness in private and public restrooms while providing a new packaging and industry concept.

[0040] While the foregoing written description of the invention enables one of ordinary skill to make and use what is considered presently to be the best mode thereof, those of ordinary skill will understand and appreciate the existence of variations, combinations, and equivalents of the specific embodiment, method, and examples herein. The invention should therefore not be limited by the above described embodiment, method, and examples, but by all embodiments and methods within the scope and spirit of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed is:

1. A wet wipe dispenser comprising:
   a container comprising:
   an outer wall extending from a first end wall to a second end wall opposite the first end wall; and
   an internal wall extending from the first end wall to the second end wall, the first end wall, the second end wall, and the internal wall forming a through hole extending through the container; and
   a cover coupled to the container and actuated between an open position allowing a wet wipe to be dispensed through a dispensing opening in the outer wall and a closed position sealing the dispensing opening and preventing the wet wipe from being dispensed;
   wherein, with the cover in the closed position, an internal compartment formed by the container and the cover is sealed from an environment outside the wet wipe dispenser;
   wherein the through hole has a width in a range of half an inch to two inches; and
   wherein the container has a width in a range of four to six inches and a length in a range of four to five inches.

2. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1, wherein the first end wall is removable from the outer wall to permit insertion of a roll of wet wipes onto the internal wall and into the internal compartment.

3. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1, wherein the first end wall, the second end wall, the outer wall, and the internal wall have a profile shape selected from the group consisting of a circle, an oval, an ellipse, a triangle, a square, a rectangle, a pentagon, a hexagon, a heptagon, an octagon, a nonagon, and a decagon.

4. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1 further comprising a dispensing mechanism coupled to the outer wall at the dispensing opening.

5. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1 further comprising a plurality of teeth located at an edge of the dispensing opening.

6. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1 further comprising at least one wet wipe located in the internal compartment.

7. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1 further comprising a hinge coupling the cover to the outer wall.

8. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1, wherein the cover is slidable with respect to the outer wall between the open position and the closed position.

9. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1 further comprising a toilet paper roll holder comprising a dowel extending through the through hole.

10. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1 further comprising at least one magnetic strip forming a seal between the cover and the outer wall around the dispensing opening with the cover in the closed position.

11. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 1 further comprising a compartment wall extending from the first end wall to the second end wall separating the internal compartment into a first compartment and a second compartment.

12. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 11 further comprising at least one wet wipe located in the first compartment and a dry toilet paper roll located in the second compartment.

13. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 11 further comprising a second dispensing opening for the second compartment.

14. The wet wipe dispenser of claim 11 further comprising a second internal wall extending from the first end wall to the second end wall, the first end wall, the second end wall, and the second internal wall forming a second through hole extending through the container.

15. A single coil wet toilet paper wipe and dry toilet paper wipe unit comprising:
   at least one wet toilet paper wipe and at least one dry toilet paper wipe coiled around a common central axis.

16. The single coil wet toilet paper wipe and dry toilet paper wipe unit of claim 15,
   wherein the unit comprises a plurality of alternating sections of wet toilet paper wipe and dry toilet paper wipe on a single roll.

17. The single coil wet toilet paper wipe and dry toilet paper wipe unit of claim 16,
   wherein the alternating sections have a length in a range of six inches to eighteen inches.

18. The single coil wet toilet paper wipe and dry toilet paper wipe unit of claim 15,
   wherein the unit comprises a wet roll of wet toilet paper wipe and a dry roll of dry toilet paper wipe.

19. The single coil wet toilet paper wipe and dry toilet paper wipe unit of claim 18 further comprising a barrier roll located between the wet roll and the dry roll.

20. The single coil wet toilet paper wipe and dry toilet paper wipe unit of claim 19,
   wherein the barrier roll serves as a moisture barrier between the wet roll and the dry roll.

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