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(54) **Process and apparatus for forming fibers**

(57) An apparatus (10) for forming a nonwoven web (26) from a fiber forming thermoplastic polymer resin which includes a reservoir for supplying a quantity of melted fiber forming thermoplastic resin, a pump for pumping the molten resin to a fiber forming die (16) and a die for forming a discrete resin stream to flow therefrom. The die includes a first fluid passageway (20) for forming a stream of fluid, such as air, in contact with and substantially surrounding the formed flow of resin for a

predetermined distance within the die (16) and an interrupt system (18) for selectively cycling the flow of resin on and off and clearing the resin from the fiber forming die (16). A receiving belt (26) collects the fibers (22) formed from the resin flow below the first fluid passageway spaced at a predetermined distance (A') from the die (16).

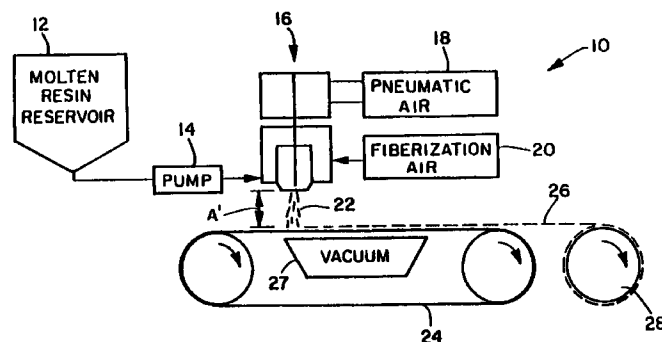


FIG. 1

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
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X	US 3 825 280 A (MYERS J) 23 July 1974 * figure 2 *	14	
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A	GB 1 478 800 A (ROTHMANS OF PALL MALL) 6 July 1977 * the whole document *	1-39	D01D B29C D04H B05B
A	US 4 295 809 A (MIKAMI TAKASHI ET AL) 20 October 1981 * figures *	1-39	
A	US 4 692 371 A (MORMAN MICHAEL T ET AL) 8 September 1987 * figures 1A,2 *	1-39	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 19 October 1998	Examiner Barathe, R
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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Application Number
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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
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A	US 4 785 996 A (BOGER BENTLEY J ET AL) 22 November 1988 * column 6, line 57 - column 7, line 10 * -----	12	
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