INSULATIVE SLEEVE FOR A CONTAINER

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ABSTRACT

An insulative sleeve for encasing a bucket/pail is disclosed. The sleeve, made of a flexible absorbent foam, conforms to the general shape of the bucket/pail and is used to prevent or limit the formation of condensation on the outer surface. The sleeve also provides insulation for the beverage ice bath retained within the bucket/pail. The sleeve may slip on to the bucket or open edges in the sleeve sidewall may allow the sleeve to wrap the bucket and be closed using mechanisms such as hook-and-loop material, zipper, hook fasteners or the like.
INSULATIVE SLEEVE FOR A CONTAINER

RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] The present application claims the filing benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/377,124, filed on Aug. 26, 2010 and titled “Insulative Sleeve For A Container”. The referenced provisional application is hereby incorporated by reference as well.

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present device relates to absorbent, insulative sleeve for containers. Particularly, the present device relates to a sleeve for a bucket (a.k.a. pail), as might be served in a bar or restaurant, filled with ice or cold water for keeping items cold at a patrons table.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] More frequently, restaurants and bars are serving bottled drinks, such as beer, wine coolers, pop, or the like, in ice-filled buckets as specials and usually at a cost-savings to the customer. Such “bucket-specials” can be a significant money-making event for establishments. These are not typical ice-buckets used for chilling a bottle of wine or the like. The type of bucket (or pail) to which the invention relates is a wire-handled, frusto-conical, metal bucket (or pail) used for carrying fluids in most cases.

[0004] Unfortunately, the ice cold bucket causes a great deal of condensation to form on the outer surface of the bucket. In humid climates, the amount of moisture condensing on the bucket outer surface can be significant in a very short time. The condensing moisture eventually runs off the bucket and pools on the table, causing a mess for patrons who may inadvertently place arms, bags or other items in the water.

[0005] Further, the standard thin-walled buckets do little to insulate the ice reservoirs within from heat. Accordingly, the ice can melt very quickly requiring frequent replacement. In especially warm climates, e.g., outdoor summer beer gardens, the rate of melt for ice can be extremely high.

[0006] The present invention addresses and solves each of these potential problems and provides improvements in the areas of condensation prevention and thermal insulation which have appearance, environmental and cost benefits. Solutions to other problems associated with the handling of heavy, wet buckets may also be achieved by the present device.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] An insulated cover for a container is disclosed.

[0008] In an embodiment of the invention, the cover is comprised of a foam rubber and has a conical sidewall open on at least the wider end. Preferably, the narrow (bottom) end of the cover is terminated prior to the apex and is also open. However, the bottom may also comprise a circular foam piece attached by its periphery to the terminated conical sidewall.

[0009] In another embodiment, the sidewall includes a closure for opening the sidewall to insert a suitable container, such as an ice bucket for example. The closure may be closed using a zipper, hook-and-loop material, snaps, hooks or the like.

[0010] In various embodiments, an outer surface of the cover may be printed for advertisements, games, decor, or other such purposes.

[0011] Other embodiments of the invention will be more evident from a review of the detailed description and the appended drawing figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] For the purpose of facilitating an understanding of the subject matter sought to be protected, there are illustrated in the accompanying drawings embodiments thereof, from an inspection of which, when considered in connection with the following description, the subject matter sought to be protected, its construction and operation, and many of its advantages should be readily understood and appreciated. The components in the drawings are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead being placed upon illustrating the principles of the invention. In the following description and throughout the numerous drawings, like reference numerals are used to designate corresponding parts.

[0013] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 2 is a cross-section of the embodiment of FIG. 1; and

[0015] FIG. 3 is a side view showing the preferred dimensions of embodiments of the present invention;

[0016] FIG. 4 is a top view showing preferred dimensions of specific embodiments of the present invention which are used with ice buckets;

[0017] FIG. 5 is a bottom view showing the preferred dimensions of embodiments of the present invention; and

[0018] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the present device.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0019] While this invention is susceptible of embodiment in many different forms, there is shown in the drawings, and will herein be described in detail, preferred embodiments of the invention, including embodiments of the various components of the invention, with the understanding that the present disclosure is to be considered as an exemplification of the principles of the invention and is not intended to limit the broad aspect of the invention to embodiments illustrated.

[0020] Referring to FIGS. 1-6, there are illustrated embodiments of a bucket insulative sleeve, generally designated by the numeral 10. The present invention is primarily for use with metal or plastic buckets (a.k.a. pails) typically used in establishments and homes to serve multiple bottles and/or cans of a cold beverage. However, embodiments of the insulative sleeve 10 may be found useful applied to buckets/pails employed in a number of alternate purposes as well.

[0021] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of an insulative sleeve 10 for a bucket/pail. The sleeve 10 comprises a sidewall which is preferably made of a flexible foam or insulative material having a thickness in the range of from about 0.06 inch to about 1.00 inch. The flexible foam is preferably somewhat absorbent. In order to snugly fit about a bucket/pail, the sidewall has a substantially frustoconical shape, tapering from top to bottom. In the illustrated embodiment, a circular base is attached to the bottom edge of the sidewall. The base may be made from the same material as the sidewall, thicker or thinner, or a different material, e.g., a more absorbent or more durable material.

[0022] As shown in FIG. 3, the sidewall of a most preferred embodiment has a height of about 7.125 inches. Preferred embodiments have a sidewall height in the range of from
about 5.0 inches to about 10 inches. FIGS. 4 and 5 show the dimensions for the most preferred embodiment having a top opening diameter of about 9.25 inches and a bottom diameter of about 6.75 inches. The individual ranges of the two dimensions are, for the bottom, from about 3.0 inches to about 8 inches, and for the top edge about 4.0 inches to about 14 inches.

With reference to FIG. 6, another embodiment of the invention is illustrated. Identical to the embodiment of FIG. 1 in most regards, the sleeve 10 of FIG. 6 includes a closing mechanism in the sidewall. The open edges allow a bucket/pail to be more easily inserted into the sleeve 10. Then, the closing mechanism, such as hook-and-loop material, a zipper, hook fasteners or the like, can bring the sleeve 10 into tight conformity with the bucket/pail.

It should be emphasized that the above-described embodiments of the present invention, particularly, any “preferred” embodiments, are possible examples of implementations merely set forth for a clear understanding of the principles for the invention. Many variations and modifications may be made to the above-described embodiment(s) of the invention without substantially departing from the spirit and principles of the invention. All such modifications are intended to be included herein within the scope of this disclosure and the present invention, and protected by the following claims.

The matter set forth in the foregoing description and accompanying drawings is offered by way of illustration only and not as a limitation. While particular embodiments have been shown and described, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that changes and modifications may be made without departing from the broader aspects of applicants’ contribution. The actual scope of the protection sought is intended to be defined in the following claims when viewed in their proper perspective based on the prior art.

What is claimed is:

1. An insulative device for a bucket/pail comprising:
   a sidewall comprised of a foam material having a thickness in the range of from about 0.06 inch to about 1.00 inch, the sidewall having a substantially frustoconical shape; and
   a circular base attached to a bottom edge of the sidewall.
2. The insulative device of claim 1, wherein the sidewall has a height in the range of from about 5.0 inches to about 10 inches.
3. The insulative device of claim 1, wherein the circular base has a diameter in the range of from about 3.0 inches to about 8 inches.
4. The insulative device of claim 3, wherein the sidewall has a top edge having a diameter in the range of from about 4.0 inches to about 14 inches.
5. The insulative device of claim 1, further comprising open edges in the sidewall which run from a top edge of the sidewall toward the bottom edge of the sidewall.
6. The insulative device of claim 5, further comprising a closing mechanism for holding the open edges closed.
7. The insulative device of claim 6, wherein the closing mechanism is hook-and-loop material.
8. The insulative device of claim 6, wherein the closing mechanism is a zipper.
9. An insulative device for a bucket/pail comprising a sidewall comprised of a flexible material having a thickness in the range of from about 0.06 inch to about 1.00 inch, the sidewall having a substantially frustoconical shape.
10. The insulative device of claim 10, further comprising a base attached to a bottom edge of the sidewall.

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