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ROAD LINE MARKERS

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FIG. 1.

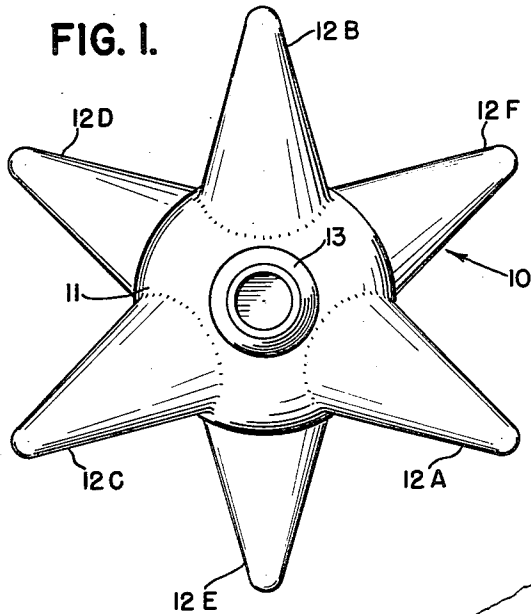
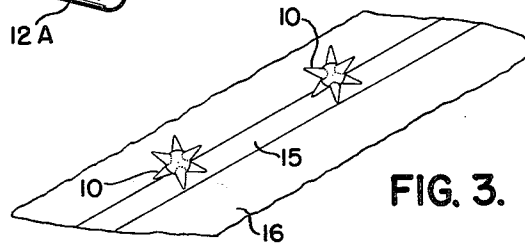
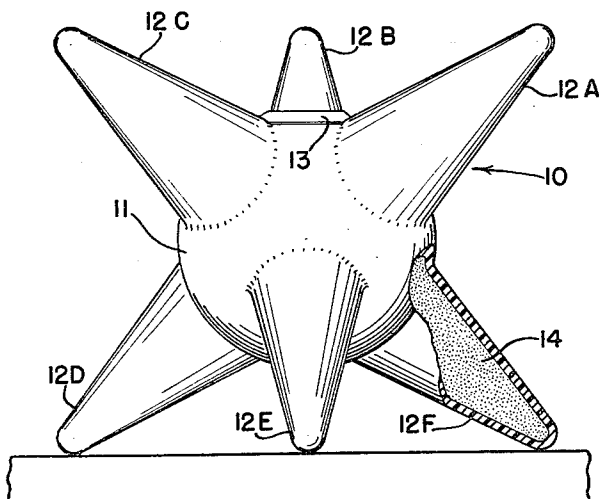


FIG. 3.

FIG. 2.



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ROAD LINE MARKERS

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This invention relates to improvements in road line markers, and more particularly to an improved marker of the type used to prevent cars and trucks from driving on freshly painted road lines.

The ordinary method of protecting wet paint lines on roads or highways until the paint has had a chance to dry, is to position upright flags at intervals along the line. Such conventional markers are not entirely satisfactory for their intended purpose, however. For one thing, said flags are usually mounted on relatively large wooden bases which cannot be placed directly on the line without smearing the paint and it is therefore necessary to position the markers on each side of the line, with the result that the usable width of the road is restricted. Moreover, in the usual method of placing the markers on the road or highway, a workman on the back of a moving truck merely drops said markers onto the road and it is not infrequent that a marker does not land squarely on its base, and falls over. Further, such conventional markers are easily overturned or displaced by winds or by the air currents created by passing trucks and cars, thus causing a dangerous hazard for motorists.

With the above considerations in mind, the principal objects of the present invention are to provide a novel marker for road lines and the like which can be placed directly on a painted line, thereby permitting the unrestricted use of the driving lanes, which improved marker can be dropped into position from a moving truck and will always land in an upright position, and which novel marker cannot be overturned by winds or air currents.

A more specific object of the present invention is to provide a road marker for the purposes described which is in the form of a six-pointed device resembling a child's jackstones, or so-called "jacks," said marker being so designed that it is supported in an upright position on three of said projecting points no matter how it is dropped, and wherein said three-point support provides maximum stability against winds and air currents.

A further specific object is to provide a novel six-pointed road line marker as described, wherein the ground area actually contacted by the three supporting points is so small that said marker may be placed directly on a wet paint line without noticeably smearing the paint.

A further object is to provide a novel road line marker having a plurality of projecting points, as described, wherein one of the upstanding points can be utilized as a handle to facilitate the grasping of said marker when the same is being removed by a workman in a moving truck.

A further object of the invention is to provide a novel road line marker which is hollow in form and which is molded of a relatively inexpensive, flexible plastic material, thus not only minimizing manufacturing costs, but providing a unique, flexible marker which will not ordinarily be broken or even seriously damaged in the event it is struck or run over by a vehicle.

A further object is to provide a novel, hollow road line marker molded of a relatively inexpensive plastic, as described, which hollow marker can be readily filled with sand or other inexpensive material to increase its weight and stability.

A further object is to provide a novel road line marker which is formed in the shape of a six-pointed jack, as described, which device will be readily seen by motorists,

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and wherein the pointed form of said marker will cause drivers to take precautions to avoid striking the same for fear of injuring their tires.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a novel, six-pointed road marker, as described, which structural design permits a large number of said markers to be stacked together in compact form for convenient and economical shipping or storage.

With these and other objects in view, which other objects and advantages will become apparent in the following description, the invention consists of the improved marker for road lines and the like, and all of its parts and combinations, as set forth in the claims, and all equivalents thereof.

In the accompanying drawing, illustrating the preferred embodiment of the invention, and wherein the same reference numerals designate the same parts in all of the views:

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of the novel road line marker;

FIG. 2 is a side elevational view of said marker; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view on a reduced scale of a portion of a road having a pair of said markers in position thereon.

Referring now more particularly to the drawing, the novel road marker 10 comprising the present invention includes an enlarged central portion 11, which is spherical in the preferred form of the invention but which may be of any desired shape, and projecting from said central portion are identical, tapered legs, or points, 12A, 12B, 12C, 12D 12E and 12F. Said marker is hollow and is preferably molded of an inexpensive, flexible plastic material. Due to said unique design, wherein all of the parts have good draw, it has been found that the present marker can be readily molded in one piece, which contributes to its relatively inexpensive manufacturing cost. With respect to the particular material employed, it is contemplated that any of several commercial plastics, or rubber, would be satisfactory, and the invention is not to be limited in this respect.

As appears in FIGS. 1 and 2, the six points, or legs, 12A through 12F, are formed integrally in the surface of the central portion 11, and are tapered outwardly to terminate in relatively small points. Said legs are equally spaced about the peripheral surface of said sphere 11, which arrangement is generally similar to a child's jack, and with the result that said marker will always rest on three of said points no matter how it is positioned. In FIG. 2, for example, the marker is supported by the legs 12D, 12E and 12F, but it could as well be supported on any of the other similarly-related sets of legs, the importance of which feature will be hereinafter seen.

Said marker 10 is hollow, as described, and formed in a suitable location in the spherical central portion 11 is an aperture in which a cap or plug 13 is removably fitted. The function of said opening is to provide communication with the interior cavity whereby sand 14 (FIG. 2), or other inexpensive, relatively heavy material, can be introduced into said hollow marker to increase its weight and stability.

In the use of a road line marker of the general type herein concerned, a workman positioned in the back of a slowly moving truck ordinarily merely drops the markers onto the road, said markers falling at least several inches to the pavement. With conventional markers, which are in the form of upright flags mounted on flat, wooden bases, it is quite common for some of said markers to land incorrectly and to fall over. Moreover, winds and air currents created by passing cars and trucks frequently overturn the same, in which event said markers create a dangerous hazard for drivers. A further dis-

advantage of such conventional markers is that they must be positioned to the side of the paint line, in order to avoid smearing the paint, with the result that the width of the traffic lanes is reduced.

In the use of the improved road line marker comprising the present invention, the marker can be dropped from a moving truck in the conventional manner, and due to the novel, six-pointed form thereof said marker will always land on three of said points, or legs, and will always be supported in an upright position. Thus, with the present invention the possibility of the marker landing incorrectly and falling over to an inoperative position is eliminated. In addition, the three-point support provided by the three diverging, ground-engaging legs provides maximum stability against displacement by the wind or by the air currents created by passing trucks and cars. Said unique shape also provides relatively little flat body surface areas for said air currents or wind to act on. When the markers are being collected by a workman in a moving truck, after the paint line has dried, the upstanding points thereon function as handles to facilitate the grasping of said markers.

As mentioned, and as shown in the drawing, the legs 12A through 12F in the present invention are tapered outwardly and terminate in relatively small points. Consequently, the ground area actually contacted by said supporting legs is so small that the marker can be placed on a freshly painted road line 15 (FIG. 3) without noticeably smearing the paint or marring said line. Moreover, due to the diverging nature of said supporting legs it frequently occurs that when the marker is positioned directly over a paint line only one of said legs actually rests on the line, the other two supporting legs straddling said line, thus even further reducing the contact area. As a result, the improved marker comprising the present invention can be placed directly over a road line, and there is no need to position the same to the side of said line and to thereby reduce the width of the traffic lanes, as is presently done with conventional road line markers.

In the event it is desired to increase the weight and stability of the present marker, to further minimize the possibility of its displacement by winds, the plug 13 can be temporarily removed and the interior of said hollow device filled or partially filled with sand, water or any other inexpensive, readily-available material 14 (FIG. 2). When it is desired to store or transport said markers the sand or other fill can be readily poured therefrom to lighten the same and facilitate their handling. With respect to the storing or transporting of said markers, the novel design thereof permits a large number of said markers to be stacked together in compact form, thus minimizing space requirements and reducing storage or shipping costs.

A further important advantage of the present device is that the pointed form of said marker not only makes it readily visible to motorists, but drivers will take great precautions to avoid striking the same for fear of injuring their tires on the projecting spikes, being unaware that the marker is made of a relatively soft, flexible material. In the event a vehicle does accidentally strike said marker it will ordinarily be only temporarily deformed by the impact, the resilient nature of the

marker causing it to quickly spring back to its original form, and it is infrequent that the marker is permanently or seriously damaged. Most often, of course, the durable marker will merely be knocked out of position, without damage.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the present invention provides a novel road line marker which has several important advantages over the devices commonly used for the same purpose. Principally, the present marker is superior to conventional devices for the reasons that it can be dropped from a moving truck and will always land in an upright position, it is difficult to displace, and said marker can be positioned directly on the road line to permit full use of the driving lanes.

The particular size of the marker is not critical to the present invention and can be varied to suit particular requirements, so long as it is large enough to be readily visible to motorists. Similarly, various colors can be utilized but a bright color having fluorescent properties provides the best visibility, and will probably be preferred for most uses. In short, it is contemplated that numerous changes and modifications in the illustrated form of the present invention are possible, and it is intended to cover herein not only the form of said road line marker illustrated and described herein, but also any and all changes and modifications therein as shall come within the spirit of said invention, and within the scope of the following claims.

What I claim is:

1. A road line marker, comprising a hollow, enclosed central portion formed of a flexible material, and a plurality of hollow legs formed integrally on and communicating with said central portion, said legs projecting from said central portion and being tapered outwardly and terminating in relatively small points, said projecting legs being equally spaced about said central portion, whereby said marker will be supported by several of said legs no matter how it is positioned on a surface.

2. A road line marker, comprising a hollow, enclosed central portion formed of a flexible material and having an aperture therein; a plug removably fitted in said aperture; and six hollow legs formed integrally on and projecting from said central portion, said legs being tapered outwardly and terminating in relatively small points, and said projecting legs being equally spaced about said central portion, whereby said marker will be supported by three of said legs no matter how it is positioned on a surface.

3. A road line marker, comprising a hollow, enclosed central portion formed of a flexible material and having an aperture therein; a removable closure for said aperture; and a plurality of supporting legs projecting from said central portion and being tapered outwardly and terminating in relatively small points, said projecting legs being equally spaced about said central portion whereby said marker will be supported by several of said legs no matter how it is positioned on a surface.

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