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OUTLET BOX LOCATOR

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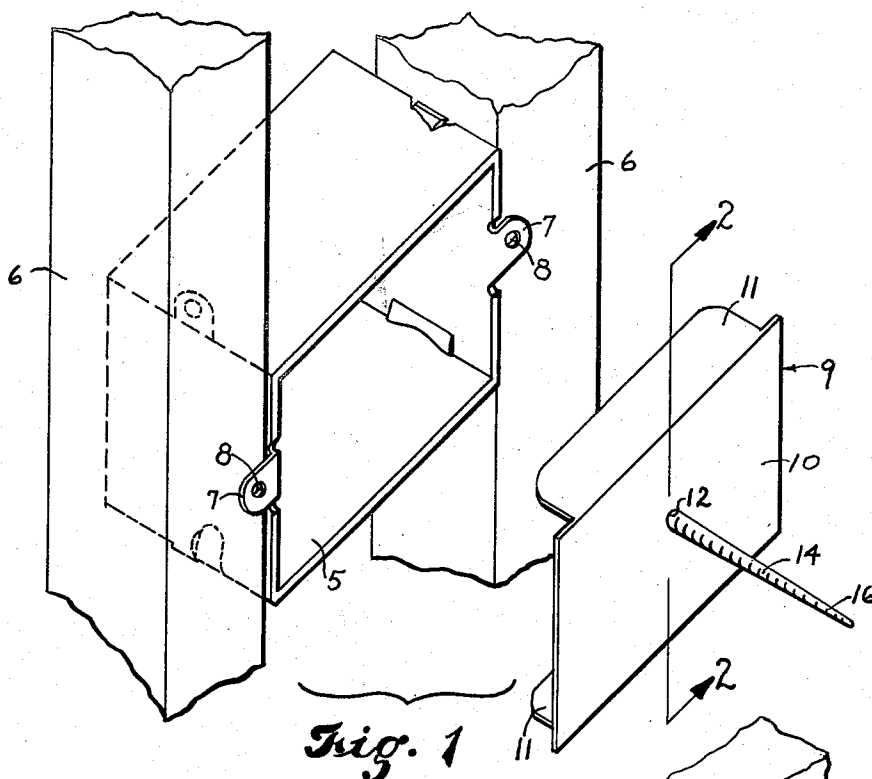


Fig. 1

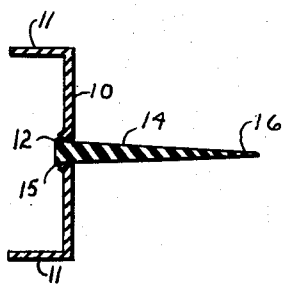


Fig. 2

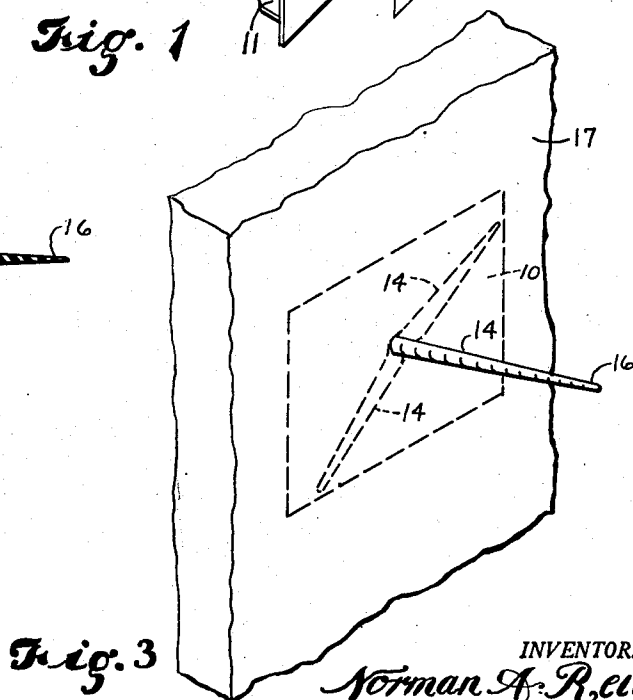


Fig. 3

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OUTLET BOX LOCATOR

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1 Claim. (Cl. 220—3.4)

1

2

My invention relates to improvements in locator closures for outlet boxes, and has as an object the provision of a simple inexpensive closure to exclude plaster from an outlet box, having locator means by which the location of an outlet box may be readily determined after the box and closure have been covered with plaster.

A further object of my invention is to provide a box closure and locator in which the locator means do not interfere with plastering but yield to stroking by the darby, trowel, or other plastering tool, so that plastering is not delayed but may proceed as if the locator means did not exist.

Still another object of my invention is to provide a box closure and locator in which the locator means also serve as a handle for removing the closure from the box, obviating the need of special tools for this purpose.

Other useful advantages of my invention will appear from the following description of a preferred embodiment of my invention as illustrated in the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is an exploded perspective view showing a locator closure according to my invention in position to be applied to an outlet box shown mounted in an unplastered wall;

Fig. 2 is a sectional view of the locator closure, on the line of section 2—2 of Fig. 1; and

Fig. 3 is a perspective view showing how the locator appears in a plastered wall.

Having reference now to the details of the drawing, I have shown at 5 in Fig. 1 a conventional electric outlet box set in a wall represented by the unplastered wall studs 6, and secured thereto by ear-tabs 7 and fasteners 8. A closure 9 for the box 5 has a face plate 10 from which extend two flanges 11 adapted to be inserted with light pressure into the box 5 in contact with opposite walls thereof so that the closure may be lightly secured to the box by friction. Centrally disposed in the face plate 10 is a hole 12 through which extends a flexible resilient member 14 which serves as locator for the outlet box 5 and as handle for the closure 9. The locator 14 is secured in the hole 12 by an enlargement or collar 15 in contact with the inner surface of the face plate 10 marginal to the hole 12. That portion of the locator 14 extending outwardly from the face plate 10 is elongated so that it may readily be grasped and is preferably tapered so that it may readily be pulled through the hole 12 until stopped by the enlargement 15. A further advantage of the tapered construction of the locator 14 is that the finely drawn extremity 16 will leave little marking in wet plaster if the lo-

cator is bent so as to be pressed into the plaster beyond the margins of the face plate 10. It will be appreciated that ordinarily the length of the outwardly extending portion of the locator 14 will be in such proportion to the area of the face plate 10 that the extremity 16 will not reach from the centrally located hole 12 beyond the margins of the face plate, but with some types of small outlet boxes this proportion will not always permit a length of the locator suitable for grasping, and the tapered construction of the locator then is desirable.

When the outlet boxes 5 have been secured to walls as illustrated in Fig. 1 or in any other suitable manner, the locator closures 9 are simply pressed into place to close the open faces of the boxes. Plasterers may then spread plaster freely over the wall surface, the locators 14 yielding resiliently to the plastering tool as indicated in broken lines in Fig. 3 and springing outwardly after the tool has passed over them, to appear extending from the plastered wall 17. When electricians return to the construction job to complete their work, the location of each outlet box is clearly marked and the boxes are interiorly free of plaster. It will be understood that outlet boxes are set close to the finished surface of a wall so that they may be covered by a thin finish plate substantially flush with the plaster surface. Accordingly, the plaster coat concealing the closure 9 will be quite thin and will readily rupture along the marginal lines of the face plate 10, shown in dotted line in Fig. 3, when the locators 14 are grasped and pulled outwardly to free the closures from the boxes. Any splintering of plaster along said marginal lines will be slight and easily concealed by any conventional finish plate.

The extremely simple construction of my improved closure locator permits the use of economical materials in its manufacture. As there are no threaded holes for receiving bolts or screws, metal is not required for the closure 9, which may be made of thin plastic sheet of suitable stiffness and springiness to provide friction with the walls of the box 5, or may even be made of cardboard. While rubber is a suitable material for the locator 14, it may also be made of resilient plastic cord, cut in suitable lengths and heated and deformed to form the enlargement 15.

My invention is to be understood as including all modifications fairly embraced in the scope of the appended claim.

I claim:

A closure and locator for an outlet box, comprising a flat plate, means on said plate for fric-

3

tionally engaging said box to retain said plate as a closure therefor, and an elongated resiliently flexible rod-like member having one end secured to said plate substantially centrally thereof and extending outwardly therefrom and at right angles thereto to afford a finger grip, said member being sufficiently resiliently flexible so as to be capable of lying parallel to said plate in any direction from its secured end when subjected to lateral pressure and to spring back to its original position when released from pressure.

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4

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