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(54) **TOILET SEAT COVER AND PORTABLE DISPENSER FOR SAME**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

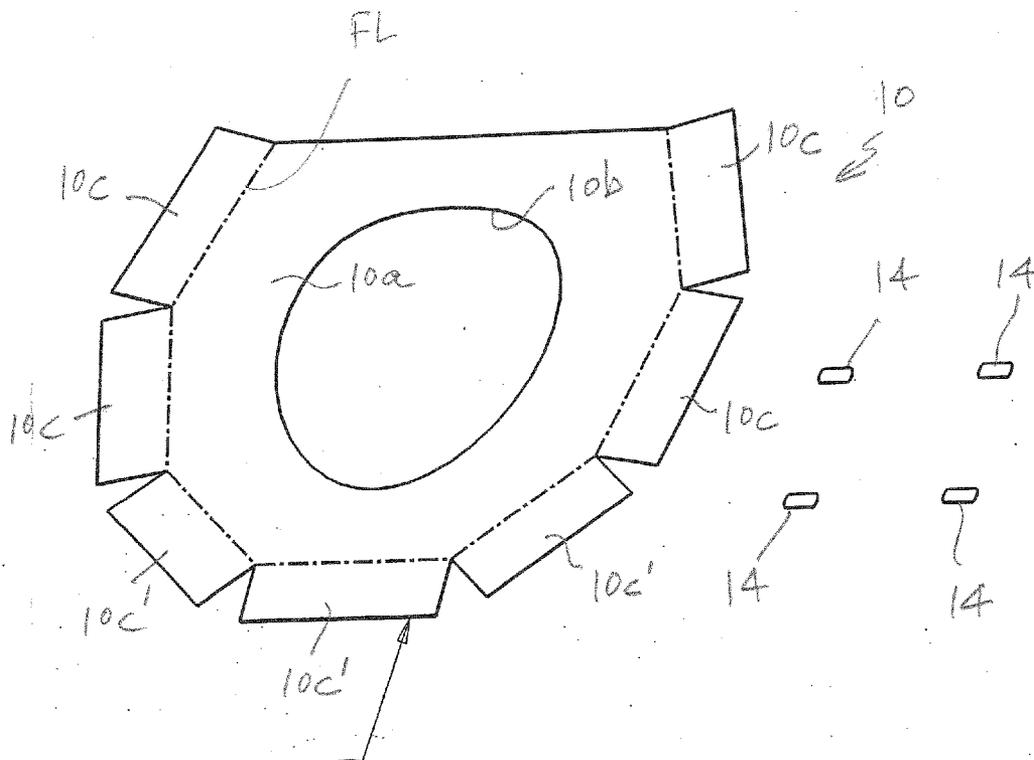
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A toilet seat cover includes a panel having a surface configuration generally conforming to the shape of a toilet seat to cover the top surface of the toilet seat. The panel has a central opening corresponding to the opening formed by an inner edge of the toilet seat. Flaps are arranged along the front and lateral edges and configured to form inter-flap spaces between adjacent flaps when arranged in the plane of the panel that are eliminated when adjacent flaps are placed on a toilet seat and hang downwardly off the front and lateral edges butting adjacent flaps to overlay the top as well as the edges of the toilet seat. A portable dispenser is disclosed for dispensing the seat covers and moisturized towelettes to accommodate parents travelling or away from home with children.

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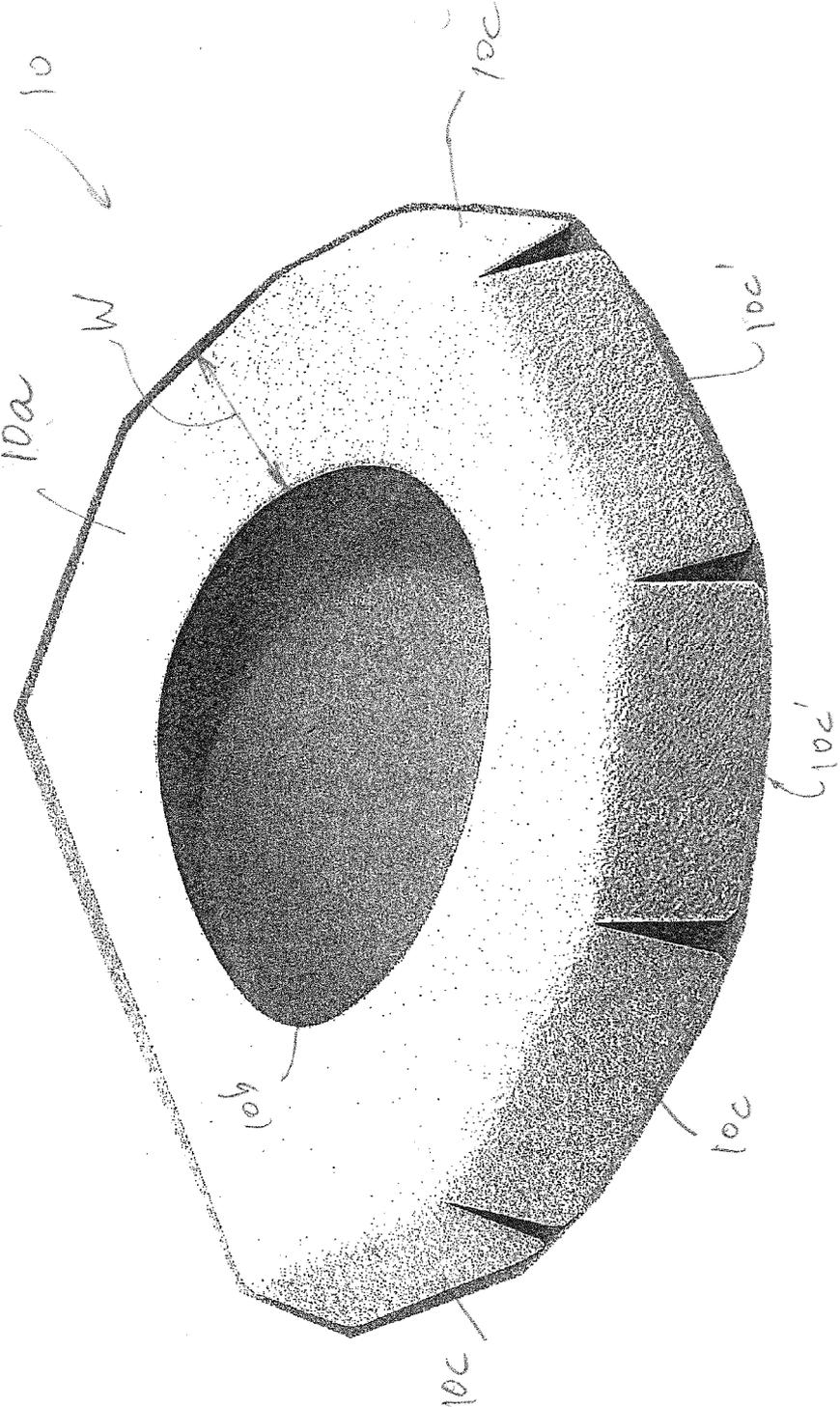


FIG. 1

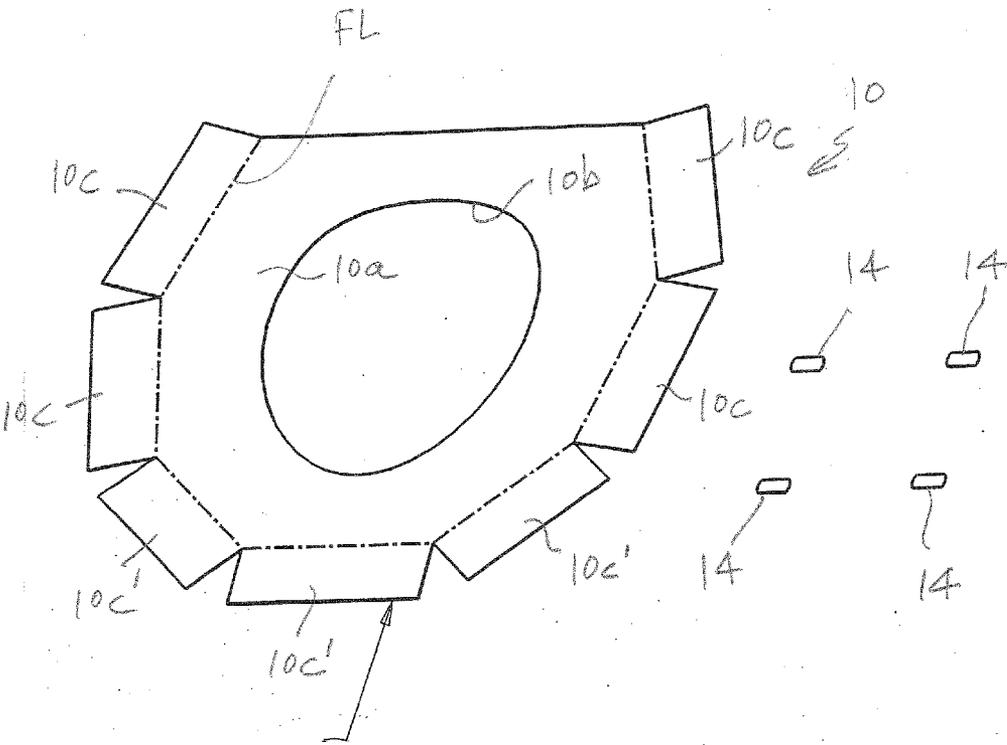


FIG. 2

FIG. 3

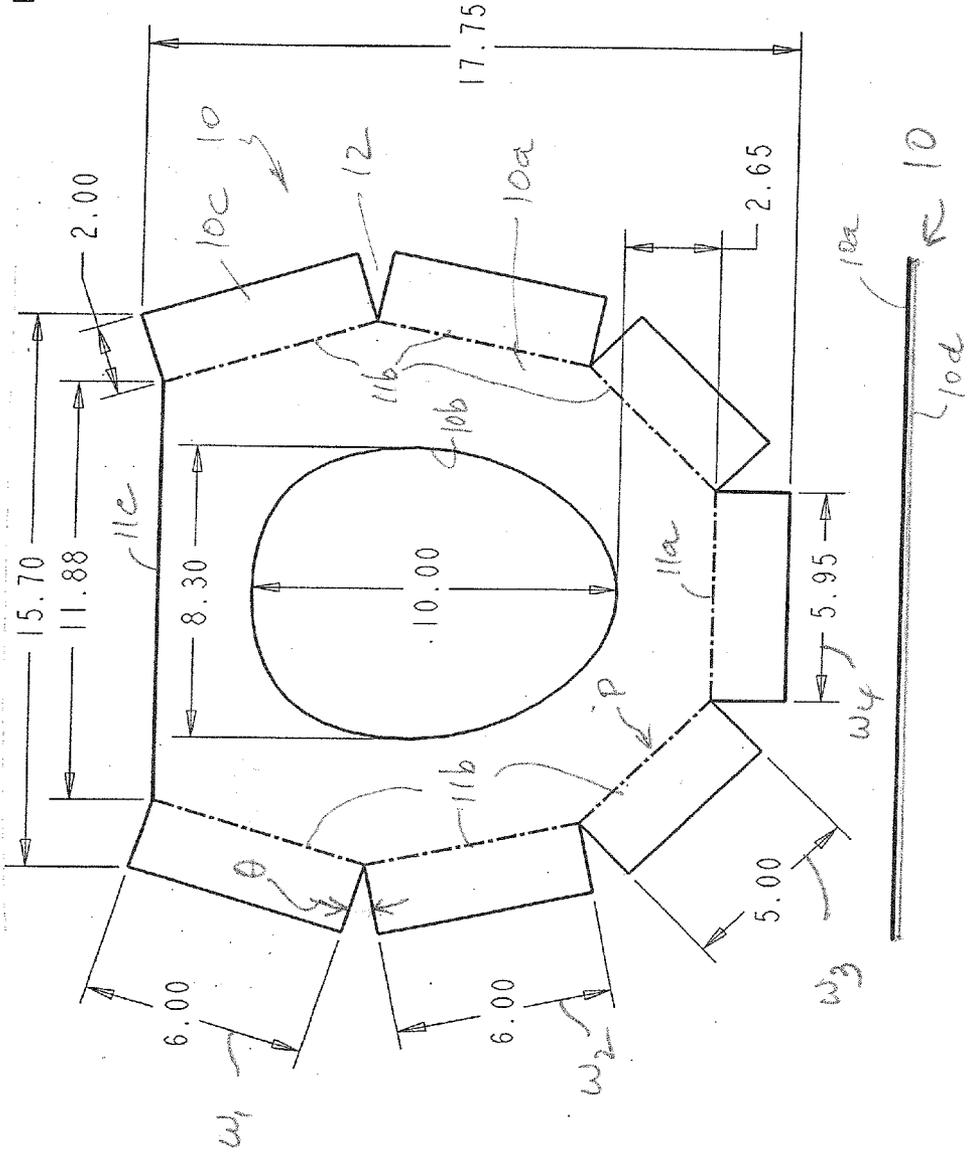


FIG. 4



FIG. 5

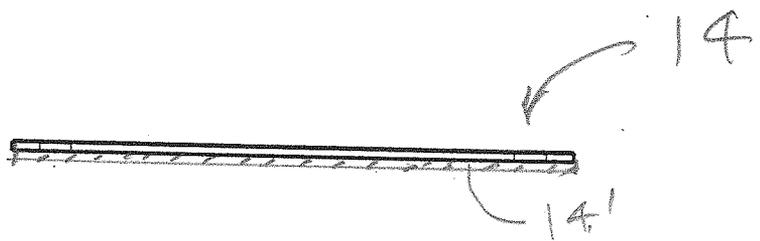
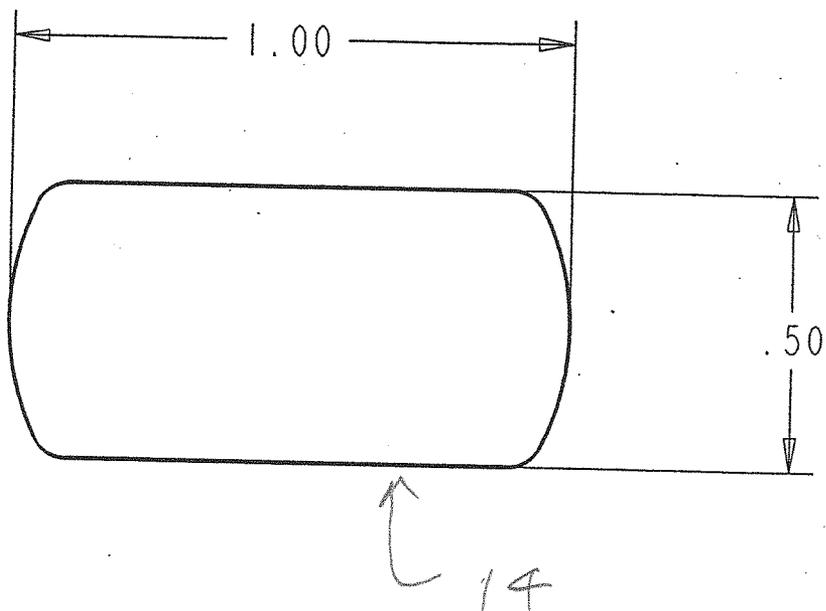


FIG. 6

FIG. 7

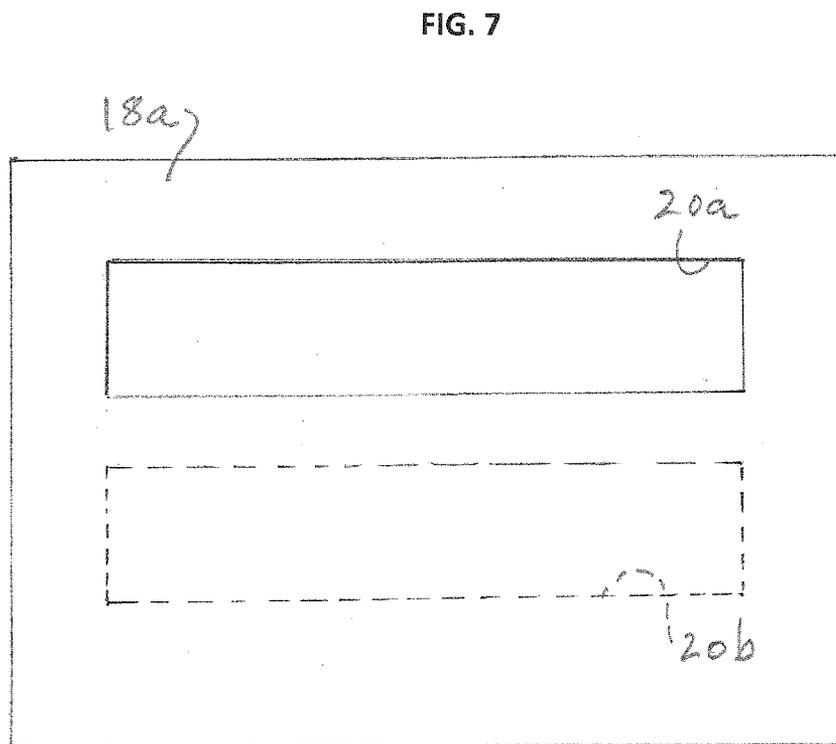
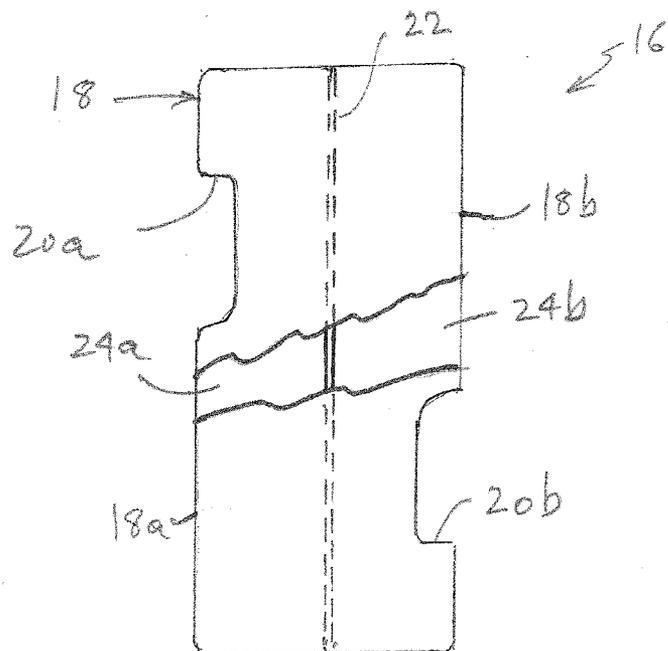


FIG. 8



TOILET SEAT COVER AND PORTABLE DISPENSER FOR SAME

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] This present invention generally relates to toilet seat covers and, more specifically, to a toilet seat construction and dispenser that promote their portability for use by parents for children while traveling or away from home.

[0003] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0004] Public toilet seats are normally covered with germs and debris from previous users and the use of toilets by children is particularly worrisome to parents when traveling or away from home. Parents of young children take the steps they can when away from home to protect their children from germs in public restrooms and disease, including the use of toilet seat covers when these are made available. However, toilet seat covers provided in public facilities are generally in a form of a very thin sheet of flimsy disposable paper shaped like a toilet seat. These covers are designed to protect the toilet user from germs that may result from making contact with the toilet seat. However, these are normally dry pieces of paper that do not contain any liquid impermeable barriers, means for securing the cover to the toilet seat and tend to be oversized and unmanageable.

[0005] Because toilet seat covers available in public restrooms are typically made of thin flimsy paper, it is intended that such paper be flushed down the toilet after use.

[0006] To avoid such toilet seat cover from moving about and exposing the user to the seat cover itself, some seat covers are oversized to drape over the sides of the toilet bowl. Others have recommended taping cover to the toilet seat as suggested in U.S. Published Patent Publication No. 2012/0216342. Other than bringing their own toilet seat for placement above a public toilet seats parents do not have many options and none of these have been suitable or convenient and easy to use to prevent the exposure of their children to potential hazards in public restrooms.

[0007] Toilet seat covers, when provided in public facilities, are generally available through toilet seat covers dispensers. These are generally large and bulky to accommodate a large quantity of toilet seat covers in anticipation of substantial traffic or use and/or to avoid frequent refilling. Accordingly, such toilet seat cover dispensers are typically mounted by means of brackets or other suitable fasteners on a wall. Toilet seat cover dispensers are disclosed, for example, in U.S. Pat. No. 2,153,279. Attachment to a wall within a public restroom serves two purposes. Firstly, it supports a rather large and bulky cover dispenser, but also prevents theft. Another such toilet seat cover dispenser is disclosed in U.S. Design Pat. No. D332,889 for a toilet seat cover dispenser—also to be secured or mounted on a wall. In some instances, such toilet seat cover dispensers are more elaborate in structure and also include toilet paper dispensers and waste receptacle units, as disclosed in U.S. Design Pat. No. D364,059.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] It is, accordingly, an object of the invention to provide a toilet seat cover that overcomes the disadvantages inherent in existing toilet seat covers.

[0009] It is another object of the invention to provide a toilet seat cover that is simple in construction and economical to manufacture.

[0010] It still is another object of the invention to provide a toilet seat cover that, due to its construction, can be packaged within a small package or dispenser for use while travelling or away from home.

[0011] It is yet is another object of the invention to provide a toilet seat cover as in the previous objects that includes a barrier to prevent any transfer of fluid through the cover that may be present on a toilet seat.

[0012] It is a further object of the invention to provide a portable toilet seat cover system facilitating convenient carrying or transporting of a dispenser for toilet seat covers for use by parents and others when travelling or away from home.

[0013] It is still a further is another object of the invention to provide a toilet seat cover dispenser that is portable and can dispense toilet seat covers in accordance with the invention as well as wipes or moisturized towelette to render a convenient portable system for use by parents of young children while travelling or away from home.

[0014] In order to achieve the above objects, as well as others that will become apparent hereinafter, a toilet seat cover in accordance with the present invention generally comprises a panel having a surface configuration generally conforming to the shape of a toilet seat to define a front and lateral edges and a perimeter generally coextensive with an outer edge of a toilet seat to cover the entire top surface of the toilet seat. Said panel has a generally central opening corresponding to the opening formed by an inner edge of the toilet seat. A plurality of flaps are arranged along said front and at least portions of said lateral edges. Said flaps are configured to form inter-flap spaces or cut-outs between adjacent flaps when arranged in the plane of said panel while closing or eliminating said spaces or cut-outs between adjacent flaps when placed on a seat cover and said flaps drape downwardly or hang off said front and lateral edges in orientations substantially normal to said plane of said panel. In this manner, in use, the toilet seat cover overlays the top as well as the edges of the toilet seat and the upper part of a toilet immediately below the toilet seat.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] Those skilled in the art will appreciate the improvements and advantages that derive from the present invention upon reading the following detailed description, claims, and drawings, in which:

[0016] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a toilet seat cover in accordance with the present invention with skirts or flaps draped downwardly as when covering the exterior upper part of a toilet bowl immediately below the toilet seat;

[0017] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the toilet seat cover shown in FIG. 1, with all of the flaps or skirt portions arranged in the plane of the seat cover panel, and also showing four adhesive pads for use with the toilet seat cover;

[0018] FIG. 3 is a top plan view of the toilet seat cover shown in FIG. 2, showing dimensions of the various portions of one example of a showing toilet seat cover in accordance with the invention;

[0019] FIG. 4 is a front plan view of a toilet seat cover shown in FIG. 3; FIG. 5 is a top plan view of one of the adhesive pads shown in FIG. 2; FIG. 6 is an end elevational view of the adhesive pad shown in FIG. 5;

[0020] FIG. 7 is a front elevational view of a portable dual dispenser for dispensing objects from opposite sides thereof suitable for dispensing toilet seat covers in accordance with the invention on one side and wipes on the other side; and

[0021] FIG. 8 is a side elevational view of the portable dual dispenser shown in FIG. 7.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0022] Referring specifically to the Figures, in which identical or similar parts are designated by the same reference numerals throughout, and first referring to FIG. 1, a toilet seat cover in accordance with the present invention is generally designated by the reference numeral 10.

[0023] The toilet seat cover 10 is formed of a thin panel 10a provided with a generally central opening 10b. The panel 10a generally conforms to the shape of a toilet seat on which it is to be used and defines front and lateral edges 11a, 11b, respectively, as well as a rear edge 11c to form a perimeter P generally coextensive with the outer edge of a toilet seat to thereby cover the entire top surface of a toilet seat. The central opening 10b is generally shaped and dimensioned to correspond to the opening formed by the inner edge of a toilet seat. In accordance with the present invention there are provided a plurality of flaps 10c, 10c' arranged along the front edge and at least along portions of the lateral edges. The flaps 10c are configured to form inter-flap spaces or cut-outs 12 when arranged in the plane of the panel 10a, the flaps draping downwardly and configured to substantially close or eliminate the inter-flap spaces 12 when placed on a toilet seat with the flaps hanging downwardly or from the front and lateral edges in orientation substantially normal to the plane of the panel 10a. Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, the inter-flap spaces or cut-outs 12 are generally triangular in shape, the angles θ (FIG. 4) between adjacent flaps being selected to substantially join at their lateral edges when draping downwardly to cover the top and edges of the toilet seat when the cover is placed thereon.

[0024] Since it is most likely that a child will grasp on to the forward portions of the toilet seat or the lateral edged proximate to the front of the toilet seat, the flaps 10c, 10c' are provided along those edges or portions of edges. In the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. 1-3 the flaps are provided along the front edge 11a and the entire lateral edges 11b of the seat cover 10. No flaps are provided nor needed along the back edge 11c.

[0025] To optimize closure and covering of the toilet seat during use, the widths of the flaps may vary to correspond to the curvature of the toilet seat in any given location along the perimeter. However, the specific widths w_1 - w_4 are not critical as long as the inter-flap spaces or cut-outs 12 are selected appropriately to ensure complete coverage of the top and front edge of the toilet seat.

[0026] Another advantage of the contoured shape of the toilet seat cover with the cut-outs 12 is that the total surface area of the toilet seat cover and, therefore, the quantity of paper used, is reduced, and minimized for providing their intended functions, while ensuring desired protection by the toilet seat. As it will be more fully discussed below, minimizing the quantity of paper used for the toilet seat cover and, therefore, the total bulk of the toilet seat cover when folded, facilitates this making same more portable and rendering more practical portable dispensers for use by parents while on the road or travelling.

[0027] Referring to FIG. 2, the lines FL along the edges 11a, 11b about which the flaps 10c, 10c' are attached to the panel 10a may be provided with crease lines to promote and ensure that the panels drop under their own weight and to ensure that the inter-flap spaces 12 are fully closed or elimi-

nated. However, if the cover 10 is made of a sufficiently soft material or film, this may not be necessary and the panels will naturally drop, as suggested in FIG. 1, under their own weight.

[0028] Referring to FIGS. 2 and 6, adhesive pads 14 may be provided on one side of the panel 10 to better secure the cover to the top of a toilet seat and avoid sliding or slipping thereon. In FIGS. 5 and 6, the details of such adhesive pad is shown by way of example only, wherein a removable strip 14' may be removed to expose the adhesive surface on the pads prior to use. Other methods may be used to stabilize the seat covers on toilet seats, such as suggested in U.S. Published Patent Publication No. 2012/0216342 which is incorporated as if fully set forth herein.

[0029] In order to ensure that the top of the toilet seat cover on which a child may be placed is protected from any contaminants on the surface of the toilet seat cover, it is preferably provided with a impervious film or coating 10d (FIG. 4), unless the seat cover panel 10a itself is impervious to liquids or fluids. Numerous toilet seat films have been proposed and any of these that provide the requisite protection may be used. In this connection, references made to U.S. Pat. No. 4,352, 214 and European Publication No. 629278A1, the contents of which are incorporated as if fully set forth herein to provide examples of films or panels that may be used.

[0030] Referring to FIGS. 7 and 8, a presently preferred portable dispenser 16 is shown for dispensing toilet seat covers 10 of the type described. The dispenser 16 includes a case 18 having opposing generally parallel sides 18a, 18b a predetermined distance to form an internal space, each side having an opening 20a, 20b, respectively therein. A partition 22 is shown parallel to the opposing sides 18a, 18b to divide the internal space into two back-to-back compartments 24a, 24b, each accessible through one of the openings 20a, 20b in an associated side. The openings are configured and dimensioned to dispense toilet seat covers, for example, from one part of the dispenser and wipes or towelettes from the other compartment through the other associated openings. As indicated, by reducing the bulk or the effective surface area of the toilet seat covers, the dispenser 16 can be reduced in size used for conventional toilet seat covers and made portable. By providing back to back compartments for toilet seat covers and baby wipes or towelettes the dispenser 16 is ideal for parents travelling with their children. While the embodiment shows the partition to be arranged generally along the center of the case to divide the internal space into two substantially equal size compartments, this is not critical. Ideally, the number of toilet seat covers should generally be equal the number of wipes or a reasonable proportion of one to the other to accommodate typical requirements while travelling. It is contemplated that the dispenser 16 will be dimensioned to accommodate the needs for one or two days of travelling. Naturally, on longer trips a number of such dispensers may be required.

[0031] The covers 10 stay in place as indicated and not only cover the top of the seat but also the sides so the parents need not to be concerned about a child touching any part of the seat. Small and easy to carry anywhere, the seat can just be peeled off the seat when finished and thrown away or flushed. The toilet seat cover keeps germs and debris off the child's skin.

[0032] The specific materials from which the toilet seat cover is made is not critical, although a die-cut flushable wood pulp paper or biodegradable cotton cover are contemplated for the comfort of the child.

[0033] The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

1. A toilet seat cover comprising a panel having a surface configuration generally conforming to the shape of a toilet seat to define front and lateral edges and a perimeter generally coextensive with an outer edge of the toilet seat to thereby cover the entire top surface of the toilet seat, said panel having a generally central opening corresponding to the opening formed by an inner edge of the toilet seat; and

a plurality of flaps arranged along said front and at least portions of said lateral edges, said flaps being configured to form inter-flap spaces or cut-outs between adjacent flaps when arranged in the plane of said panel while closing or eliminating said spaces or cut-out between adjacent flaps when placed on a toilet seat and said flaps drape downwardly or hang off said front and lateral edges in orientations substantially normal to said plane of said panel, whereby in use the toilet seat cover overlays the top as well as the edges of the toilet seat and the upper part of a toilet immediately below the toilet seat.

2. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 1, wherein flaps are provided about said entire lateral edges.

3. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 1, further comprising a liquid impermeable layer on said panel.

4. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 1, wherein said flaps have selected widths along said perimeter, said flaps arranged along portions of said perimeter having greater degrees of curvature having shorter widths than the widths of flaps arranged along portions of said perimeter having lower degrees of curvature.

5. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 1, further comprising attaching means for selectively attaching and maintaining the seat cover in place on the toilet seat.

6. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 5, wherein said attaching means are a plurality of adhesive pads.

7. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 6, wherein at least one adhesive pad is provided along each lateral edge.

8. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 1, wherein said inter-flap spaces or cut-outs have triangular shapes.

9. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 1, wherein said flaps are dimensioned to drape or hang over the edge of the toilet seat a distance approximately equal to the average dimension between the inner and outer edges of the toilet seat.

10. A toilet seat cover comprising a panel having a surface configuration generally conforming to the shape of a toilet seat to define front and lateral edges and a perimeter generally coextensive with an outer edge of the toilet to thereby cover the entire top surface of the toilet seat, said panel having an opening generally corresponding to the opening formed by an inner edge of the toilet seat;

a plurality of flaps arranged along said front and at least portions of said lateral edges, said flaps being configured to form inter-flap spaces or cut-outs between adjacent flaps when arranged in the plane of said panel while closing or eliminating said spaces or cut-out between adjacent flaps when placed on a toilet seat and said flaps drape downwardly or hang off said front and lateral edges in orientations substantially normal to said plane of said panel; and

a liquid impermeable layer for preventing fluid on a toilet from penetrating throughout said seat cover whereby in use the toilet seat cover overlays the top as well as the upper part of the toilet immediately below the toilet seat.

11. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 10, wherein flaps are provided about said entire lateral edges.

12. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 10, further comprising a liquid impermeable layer on said panel.

13. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 10, wherein said flaps have selected widths along said perimeter, said flaps arranged along portions of said perimeter having greater degrees of curvature having shorter widths than the widths of flaps arranged along portions of said perimeter having lower degrees of curvature.

14. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 10, further comprising attaching means for selectively attaching and maintaining the seat cover to the toilet seat.

15. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 14, wherein said attaching means are a plurality of adhesive pads.

16. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 10, wherein at least one adhesive pad is provided along each lateral edge.

17. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 10, wherein two adhesive pads are provided along each lateral edge.

18. A toilet seat cover as defined in claim 17, wherein said flaps are dimensioned to drape or hang over the edge of the toilet seat at distance approximately equal to the average dimension between the inner and outer edges of the toilet seat.

19. A dispenser comprising a case having opposing generally parallel sides spaced from each other a predetermined distance to form an internal space each side having an opening therein; and

a position generally parallel to said opposing sides to divide said internal space into two back-to-back compartments each accessible through an opening in an associated side of said case, said opening being configured and dimensioned to dispense baby wipes in one compartment through associated opening and to dispense toilet set cases in the other compartment through an associated opening.

20. A dispenser as defined in claim 19, wherein said partition is arranged to divide said internal space into two substantially equally sized compartments.

* * * * *