



US 20060288470A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**  
**Nnaji**

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2006/0288470 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Dec. 28, 2006**

(54) **DISPOSABLE PROTECTIVE TOILET SEAT COVER**

**Publication Classification**

(51) **Int. Cl.**  
*A47K 13/14* (2006.01)

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... 4/245.2

(57) **ABSTRACT**

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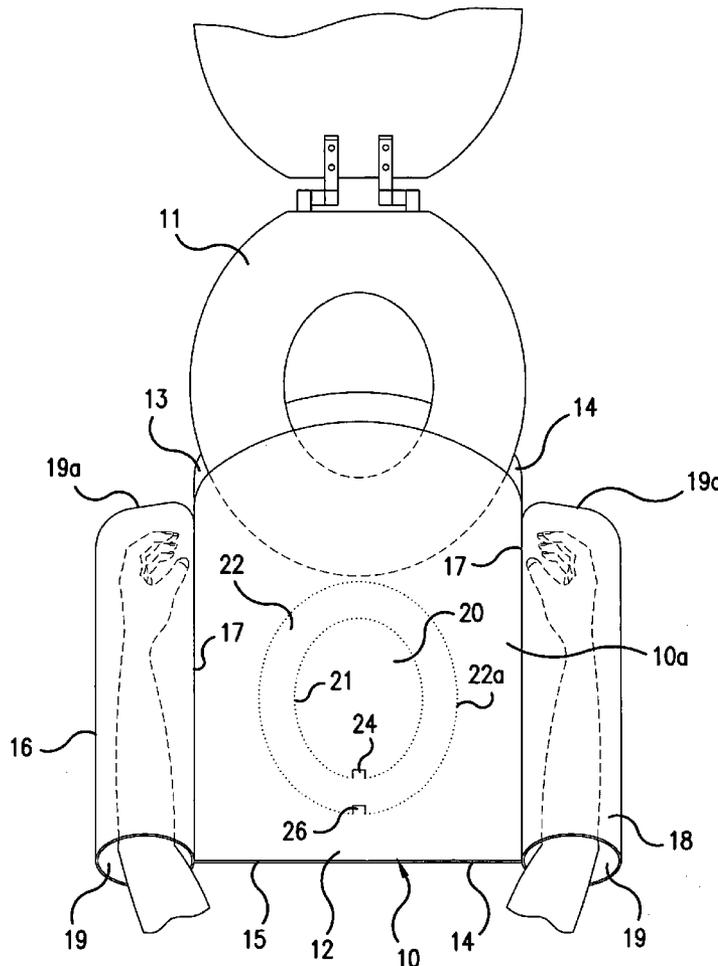
A disposable toilet seat cover (10) formed of sheet material includes a seat panel (10a) to be placed on a toilet seat and left and right side pockets (16 and 18) attached along opposite sides of the seat panel and having openings (19) directed toward a front edge of the toilet seat cover for receiving hands of a user. A user extends his hands into the left and right side pockets for manipulating the disposable toilet seat cover for placing it on a toilet seat. In a preferred embodiment, the seat panel defines a seat-panel pocket having an opening (13) directed toward a rear edge of the disposable toilet seat cover for it receiving the toilet seat. In one embodiment, the toilet seat cover is made of resinous sheet plastic and in one embodiment, the sheet material forming the seat panel has frangible lines for allowing removal of at least a center blank for creating an opening in the seat panel corresponding to an opening in a toilet seat.

(21) Appl. No.: **11/472,482**

(22) Filed: **Jun. 22, 2006**

**Related U.S. Application Data**

(60) Provisional application No. 60/693,063, filed on Jun. 23, 2005.





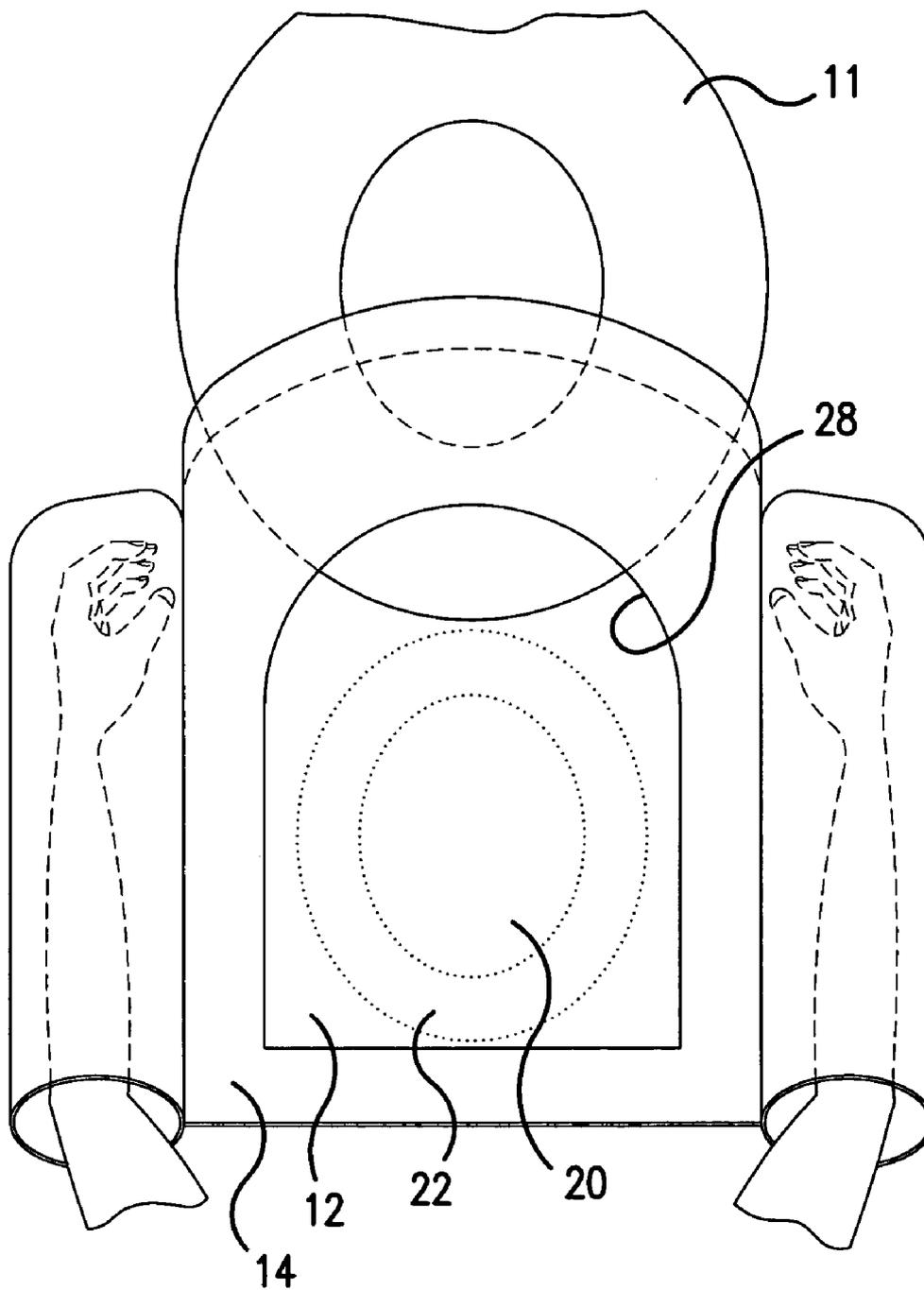


FIG. 2

**DISPOSABLE PROTECTIVE TOILET SEAT COVER**

[0001] This Non-provisional application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) on Provisional Application No. 60/693,063 filed on Jun. 23, 2005, which is incorporated herein by reference.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

[0002] Ever since it became known that personal contact in public places can transmit diseases through germs and other infectious matter, people have feared the use of public toilet facilities. Many measures have been suggested and employed for sanitizing use of such facilities, such as ultra-violet radiation, sanitizing sprays and disposable paper toilet-seat covers. In this regard, many people simply place toilet paper on tops of toilet seats before they sit on them. Similarly, dispensers containing annularly-shaped paper sheets to be placed on toilet seats are often mounted in public rest rooms. However, these devices are not sufficiently sanitary in that it is often difficult to manipulate and use them without coming into contact with the toilet seats and they often do not stay securely on the toilet seats during use. Also, bodily fluids can often permeate through toilet-seat-cover materials so that when they are used the user still comes into contact with unhealthy germs.

[0003] U.S. Pat. No. 5,144,698 to McKenzie describes a toilet seat cover including a handling mitt that is broken away from a central area of the toilet-seat cover at scored lines. This toilet-seat cover forms an envelope having one end open so that it can be slipped over a toilet seat to enclose the toilet seat for sanitary purposes. Although this toilet-seat cover has many advantages, it is still too difficult to maneuver it, as well as a toilet seat, when it is slid onto the toilet seat; thus, a user is in undue danger of coming into contact with the toilet and/or toilet seat. Further, a user must put on and take off the mitt multiple times during use, again increasing the chance of picking up germs from the mitt. Yet another problem with this toilet seat is that it does not adequately protect a child from touching sides of a toilet during use.

[0004] U.S. Pat. No. 4,806,406 to Akerman et al. similarly describes a sanitary toilet seat cover that defines an envelope for receiving a toilet seat, there being a pair of pull tabs on opposite sides of the envelope for pulling the envelope onto the toilet seat. Further, there is a front pouch formed at a front edge portion of the envelope as a container for the cover and to help pull the cover from the toilet seat after use. The toilet seat cover in this invention can be made of flexible plastic material. This toilet-seat cover also has some advantages; however, the side tabs and front pouch do not provide sufficient positive manipulation of the toilet seat cover and/or a toilet seat so that a user is assured of avoiding germs.

[0005] U.S. Pat. No. 6,813,784 to Thompson describes a sanitary toilet seat protector having side flaps. The side flaps extend below a toilet seat and permit easy grasping of the toilet seat by users, especially children, when stabilizing, or positioning, themselves on the toilet seat. Again, a difficulty with the toilet seat protector described in this patent is that it does not provide sufficient protection from touching a toilet seat when the toilet seat and the seat protector are

manipulated and it can slide from the toilet seat unless extra steps are taken, such as applying an adhesive.

[0006] Other US Patents describing toilet seat covers and protectors include U.S. Pat. Nos. 1,304,511 to Quackenbush; 5,887,291 to Bellizzi; 6,711,756 to Mullendor; and D451,178 to Massey.

[0007] However, none of these prior-art patents discloses a disposable protective toilet seat cover that is sufficiently sanitary, easy to manipulate, positively maintained on a toilet seat, and sufficiently protective of users, especially children.

[0008] Thus, it is an object of this invention to provide a disposable protective toilet seat cover that overcomes these problems.

[0009] Similarly, it is an object of this invention to provide a disposable toilet seat cover that, while being easy to carry, use and dispose of by both adults and children, also prevents users from coming into contact with germs to a great degree.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

[0010] According to principles of this invention, a disposable toilet seat cover is formed of flexible sheet material to include a seat panel for being placed on a toilet seat and left and right side pockets attached along opposite sides of the seat panel. The side pockets have openings directed toward a front edge of the toilet seat cover for receiving hands of a user and hang over sides of the toilet when the seat panel is on the toilet seat. A user can extend his hands into the left and right side pockets for manipulating the disposable toilet seat cover as well as the toilet seat when placing the cover on the toilet seat. In one embodiment, the seat panel defines a seat-panel pocket, or envelope, having an opening directed toward a rear edge of the disposable toilet seat cover for receiving the toilet seat.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

[0011] The invention is explained and described in more detail below using embodiments shown in the drawings. The described and drawn features, in other embodiments of the invention, can be used individually or in preferred combinations. The foregoing and other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following more particular description of the preferred embodiments of the invention, as illustrated in the accompanying drawing, in which reference characters refer to the same parts throughout the different views. The drawings are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead being placed on illustrating principles of the invention in a clear manner.

[0012] **FIG. 1** is a fragmented, partially-isometric, partially-plan, top view of a disposable toilet seat cover of this invention, as seen from above a toilet seat, as the toilet seat cover is being placed on the toilet seat by a user; and

[0013] **FIG. 2** is a view similar to **FIG. 1**, but as seen from below the toilet seat.

**DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT**

[0014] **FIG. 1** illustrates a disposable protective toilet seat cover **10** of this invention. The disposable toilet seat cover

**10** is formed of flexible sheet material and, in a preferred embodiment, is formed of a flexible resinous plastic sheet material.

[0015] Basically, the disposable toilet seat cover **10** includes a seat panel **10a** formed as a pocket, or envelope, by a top-ply sheet **12** and a bottom-ply sheet **14**. In this regard, the top and bottom-ply sheets **12** and **14** form the seat-panel pocket to have a rear seat-panel-pocket opening **13** for receiving a toilet seat **11**. It should be noted that the seat-panel-pocket opening **13** is directed toward a back, or rear, edge of the disposable toilet seat cover **10**, while a front edge **15** of the seat panel **10a** is closed.

[0016] The disposable toilet seat cover **10** further includes left and right pockets **16** and **18**, attached along closed side edges **17** of the seat panel **10a**. The left and right elongated pockets **16** and **18** define openings **19** at front ends for receiving left and right hands and arms of a user. Rear ends **19a** of the left and right elongated pockets **16** and **18** are closed. Thus, the user can extend his or her left and right arms into the front openings **19** of the left and right side pockets **16** and **18** to manipulate the disposable protective toilet seat cover **10**, as well as the toilet seat **11**, to thereby slide the seat panel **10a** of the toilet seat cover **10** onto the toilet seat **11**. The left and right elongated side pockets **16** and **18** then also hang below the toilet seat on the left and right sides thereof, over the toilet, substantially below the toilet seat **11**, to protect children from touching the unsanitary toilet. In this regard, children must often use their hands to support and stabilize themselves when using toilets. These elongated pockets also enable the user, in a similar manner, to remove the disposable toilet seat cover **10** from the toilet seat **11** without touching the toilet seat with bare hands.

[0017] A smaller, scored out, blank **20** of the top-ply sheet **12** of the disposable toilet seat cover **10**, when torn away at perforations **21**, leaves a smaller hole, to be used by a child, in the top-ply sheet **12**. The torn away blank **20** can then be used as protection from touching any unsanitary objects or things in a bathroom. A larger, scored out, blank **22** of the top-ply sheet **12**, once removed at perforations **22a**, conforms the disposable toilet seat cover to accommodate an adult by making a bigger center opening in the top-ply sheet **12**. Again, the leftover blank material can be used as protection from touching unsanitary objects or things. Tabs **24** and **26**, attached to the smaller and larger blanks **20** and **22** respectively, are selectively pulled rearward to remove the smaller and larger blanks **20** and **22** for creating the desired openings for conforming the toilet seat cover to accommodate a child or an adult, as desired. The bottom-ply sheet **14** has a permanent, larger open space **28** in its center for allowing fluids and other materials to pass through it and into the toilet.

[0018] Looking now at how the disposable toilet seat cover of this invention is to be used, it can be carried in a container by an individual user or it can be dispensed in public restrooms. The disposable toilet seat cover **10** is removed from a container or a dispenser, unfolded, and the top- and bottom-ply sheets **12** and **14** of the seat panel **10a** are separated to open the rear seat-panel-pocket opening **13**. The user's left and right hands are respectively inserted into the front openings **19** of the left and right elongated side pockets **16** and **18**. The user's hands are then used to manipulate the disposable toilet seat cover **10** and the toilet

seat **11** so that a toilet seat **11** is received in the rear seat-panel-pocket opening **13**. The toilet seat cover is, thusly, slid onto the toilet seat while the toilet seat **11** is lifted up by the hands in the side pockets. It will be understood that when a user has his hands in the side pockets, he can not only manipulate the disposable toilet seat cover, but he can use both his hands, through the flexible sheet material, to manipulate the toilet seat **11** as well as anything else that must be manipulated. Basically, in this attitude, both hands are available for use to manipulate things. The hands, of course are fully protected by the side pockets **16** and **18**. The hands are then removed from the side pockets and the desired tab **24** or **26** is pulled back to form a desired opening for either a child or adult in the top-ply sheet **12**. The blank that is removed at the scores is saved to be used later for protection, for operating a flush lever, for example. Once the user is finished, his hands are again placed in the side pockets and the disposable toilet seat cover **10** is pulled from the toilet seat **11**. If desired, the hands can be manipulated in the side pockets to turn the cover inside out into one of the side pockets so that all outer surface portions of the disposable toilet seat cover are now inside the side pocket. The used seat cover is then disposed of in a trash container. In this respect, if the seat cover is made of a flushable paper, it can be flushed in the toilet, however, if it is made of plastic, it is disposed of in a trash container. In a preferred embodiment, the disposable toilet seat cover of this invention is made of a resinous plastic so that it prevents migration of fluids through the material to come into contact with a user. The saved blank material **20** or **22** can be further used to open a bathroom door and is then disposed of in a trash container.

[0019] While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to a preferred embodiment, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes in form and detail may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. For example, in one embodiment, there is only one scored-out plastic blank. In another embodiment, the blank or blanks are attached by break-away adhesive rather than by scores. In yet another embodiment, there are no break-away center material pieces, rather just a hole. The disposable protective toilet seat cover can be simply placed on top of a toilet seat. However, if it is only laid on top of the toilet seat, it is not positively held to the toilet seat and may slip around during use. Similarly, the side pockets could be used with a single-ply seat panel that is used by laying it on top of a toilet seat. With such an embodiment, adhesive could be used for holding the seat cover to the toilet. The side and/or seat-panel pockets could open at both rear and front edges.

[0020] In one embodiment, the toilet seat cover is made of resinous sheet plastic and in one embodiment, the sheet material forming the seat panel has frangible lines for allowing removal of at least one center blank for creating, at a use site, an opening in the seat panel corresponding to an opening in the toilet seat. Still further, in one embodiment a powder, such as a talc powder, is placed inside the side pockets and/or the seat-panel pocket so that the respective pockets are easier to open.

What is claimed is:

1. A disposable toilet seat cover formed of flexible sheet material comprising:

a seat panel for covering an upper surface of a toilet seat on which a user is to be seated; and

left and right side pockets attached along opposite sides of said seat panel, said left and right side pockets defining openings at a front end of said disposable toilet seat cover for receiving hands for manipulating said disposable toilet seat cover to apply it to said toilet seat while the hands are protected from germs from the toilet seat.

2. A disposable toilet seat cover as in claim 1, wherein said seat panel defines a seat-panel pocket having an opening at a rear edge thereof for receiving said toilet seat.

3. A disposable toilet seat cover as in claim 2, wherein said seat panel and said side pockets are made of resinous plastic sheet material.

4. A disposable toilet seat cover as in claim 3, wherein said sheet material forming said seat panel has scored lines

therein for allowing removal of at least one blank for creating an opening in said seat panel corresponding to an opening in the toilet seat.

5. A disposable toilet seat cover as in claim 2, wherein said sheet material forming said seat panel has scored lines therein for allowing removal of at least one blank for creating an opening in said seat panel corresponding to an opening in the toilet seat.

6. A disposable toilet seat cover as in claim 1, wherein said sheet material forming said seat panel has scored lines therein for allowing removal of at least one blank for creating an opening in said seat panel corresponding to an opening in the toilet seat.

7. A disposable toilet seat cover as in claim 1, wherein said seat panel and said side pocket are made of resinous plastic sheet material.

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