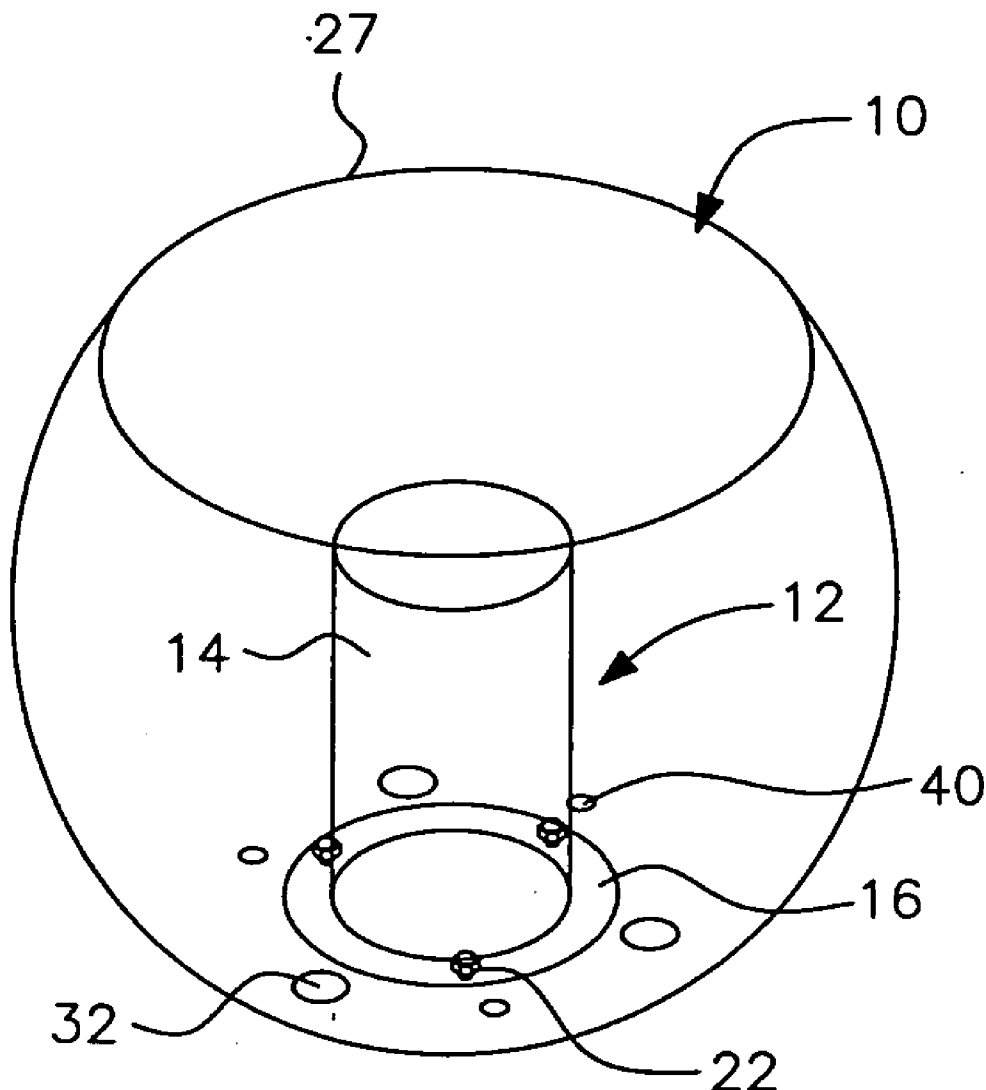




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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
HOYSAK et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2013/0087651 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Apr. 11, 2013**(54) **GARDEN HOSE HOLDER WITH
REMOVABLE CENTER POST****Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**
B65H 75/18 (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **242/570**(57) **ABSTRACT**

A hose pot has a removable center post. The post has an encircling flange adjacent the base thereof and is secured to the inside of the pot using screws or other fastening elements. Alternatively, the post may be threadedly engaged with the base wall of the pot. When the post is removed, the interior upper surface of the pot base wall is substantially flat so that the pot may be used for a variety of storage and/or plant-containing purposes.

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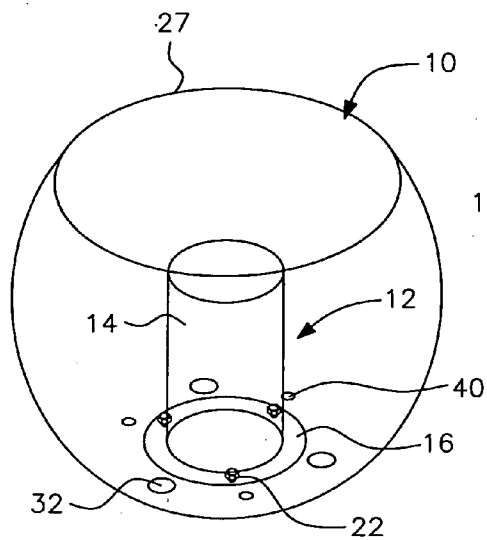


FIG. 1

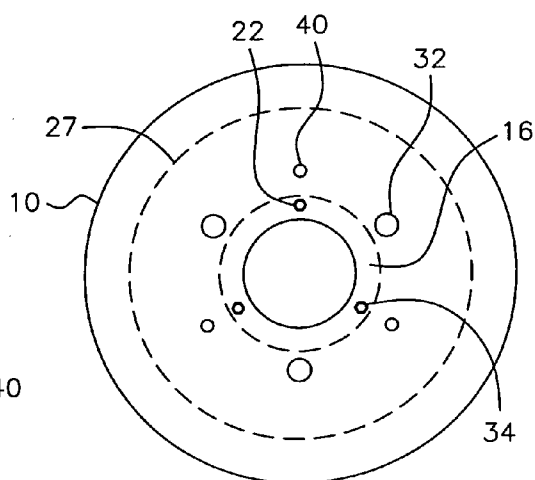


FIG. 2

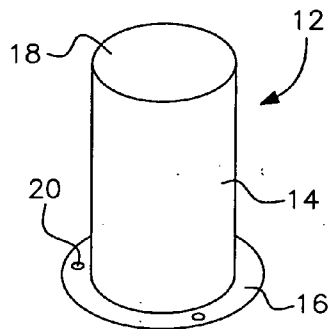


FIG. 3

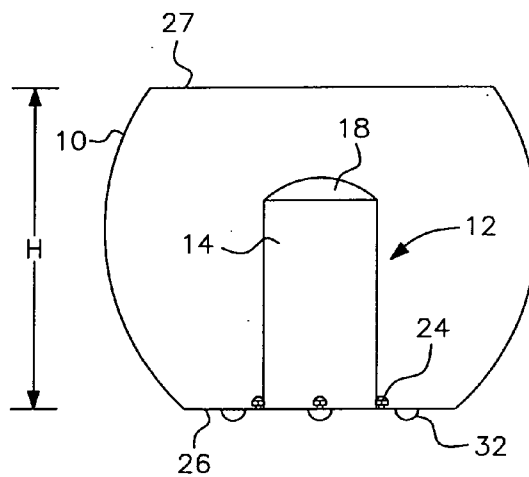


FIG. 4

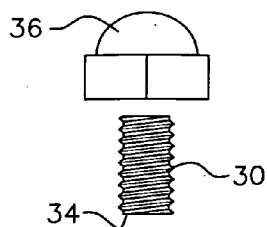


FIG. 5

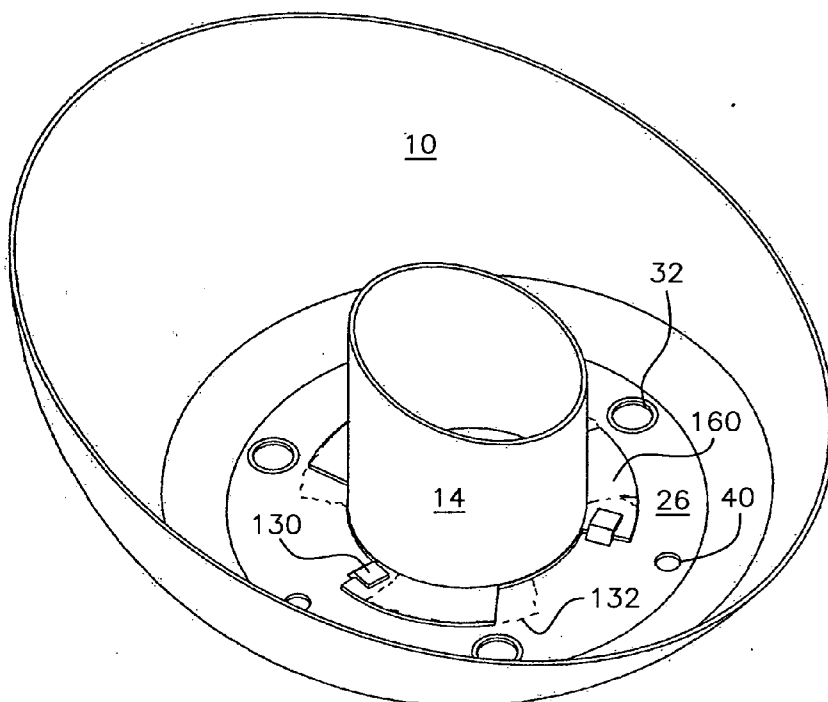


FIG. 6

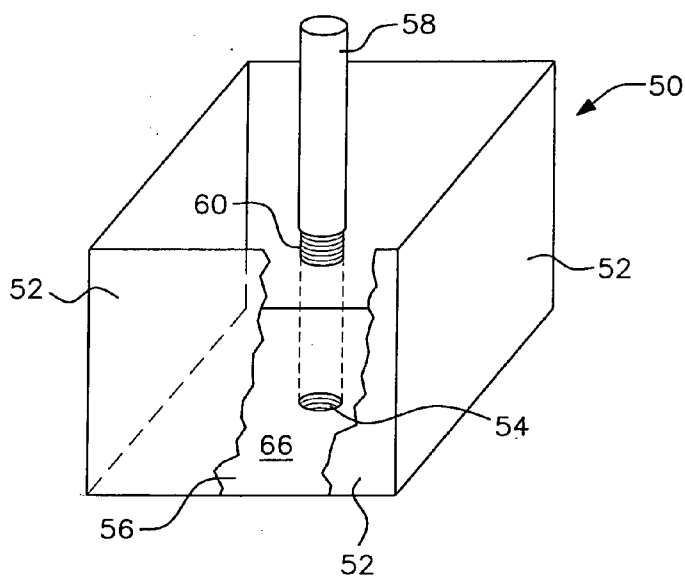


FIG. 7

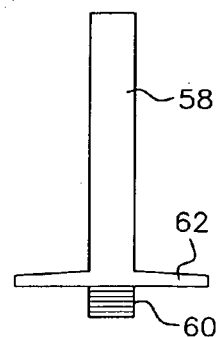


FIG. 8

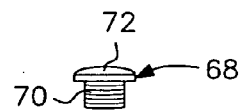


FIG. 9

GARDEN HOSE HOLDER WITH REMOVABLE CENTER POST

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention is related to gardening and lawn care needs and, more particularly, to a hose holder for hiding a hose that has a removable center post.

[0003] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0004] Garden hoses are needed to water garden plants such as grass and flowers, to hook up to sprinkler systems, to use for washing automobiles or sidewalks and for other useful outdoor purposes. Many people who use garden hoses find them unsightly when not in use. Accordingly, a wide selection of various products designed to store, reel or cover garden hoses are available to meet the needs of hose users.

[0005] One known storage container for a hose is the hose pot. The hose pot is generally a rectangular or cylindrical container having a hole in the side through which the end of the hose extends for hooking up to a faucet. The hose is placed into and removed from the container through an opening in the top of the container. Sometimes lids are provided to hide the hose completely.

[0006] Some models of hose pots include a center post attached to the bottom of the pot to help the user wind the hose inside the pot when the hose is not in use. In metal hose pots, the center post is typically attached by a circular stub several inches tall that is welded on the bottom inner surface of the pot. The center post, which is a hollow tube of sheet metal having an inner diameter, attaches to a stub having an outer diameter slightly smaller than the post inner diameter, allowing the center post to be fitted over the stub with a friction fit. When so connected, the stub keeps the center post stable and secured to the pot.

[0007] While the stub and post assist the user in winding the hose into the pot, the stub and/or center post limit use of the pot for other storage purposes by reducing the total available space inside the pot for storage of firewood, newspapers, etc. The center post and stub also reduce the maximum size of an item that can be stored in the pot, and prevent the pot from being used effectively as a planter since the post and/or stub can interfere with properly sitting a plant inside the pot.

[0008] Therefore, a need exists for a hose pot without a stub and having a removable center post so that the pot can serve many alternate uses in addition to storing a hose.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] In view of the foregoing, it is an object of the present invention to provide a hose pot for storing a hose having a stable center post that is also removable to enable the pot to be used for other purposes.

[0010] Another object of the present invention is to provide a hose pot in accordance with the preceding object in which the center post extends upwardly from the base of the pot about two-thirds the height of the pot to maximize use of the hose pot interior space available for storing a long length of hose.

[0011] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a hose pot in accordance with the preceding objects in which the base of the post is provided with a flange used to attach the post to the bottom of the hose pot and/or to provide stability to the post.

[0012] Still another object of the present invention is to provide a hose pot in accordance with the preceding objects in which the post and flange are removed as a unit and, when removed, the floor of the pot interior is flat, enabling the pot to be used in many ways, unobstructed by the post or the flange.

[0013] A further object of the present invention is to provide a hose pot in accordance with the preceding objects in which the flange has apertures therethrough that receive fastening elements that are secured to the bottom of the pot to attach the post thereto.

[0014] Another object of the present invention is to provide a hose pot having a post with a threaded end that is received within a threaded opening in the bottom of the pot to attach the post thereto.

[0015] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a hose pot in accordance with the preceding objects in which the outer surface of the pot base has feet to raise the pot off the floor and prevent the heads of the fastening elements from scratching the floor or other surface upon which the pot is supported.

[0016] It is yet another object of the invention to provide a hose pot that is not complex in structure and which can be manufactured at low cost but yet efficiently can be used as either a hose holder or for other uses around the home.

[0017] Accordingly, the present invention is directed to a hose pot having a removable center post that does not need a stub. According to one embodiment, the center post is provided with a flange having apertures therein that receive fastening elements used to secure the post to the base of the pot. In another embodiment which is not preferred, the post has a threaded lower end that is received within a threaded opening in the bottom of the pot. When secured to the pot, the center post allows for easy winding of the hose within the hose pot. When the center post is removed, the upper surface of the bottom of the pot is flat so that the pot has additional functionality as a storage container or cache pot, i.e., a planter that serves as a holder for an inner smaller flower pot that contains the soil.

[0018] These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0019] FIG. 1 is a perspective side view of a hose pot with removable center post in accordance with the present invention.

[0020] FIG. 2 is a bottom view of the hose pot and center post as shown in FIG. 1.

[0021] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the center post shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.

[0022] FIG. 4 is a side view of the hose pot and center post shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.

[0023] FIG. 5 is a side view of a representative fastening element with a cap as used to secure the removable post to the hose pot in accordance with the present invention.

[0024] FIG. 6 is a perspective, partially cut-away view of a hose pot generally like that shown in FIG. 1, but showing an alternative flange configuration having tabs that are secured to the base of the pot with clips on the pot bottom.

[0025] FIG. 7 is an exploded perspective view of an alternative embodiment of a hose pot with removable center post

in accordance with the present invention, with one side wall broken away to show the center post and its interconnection to the base wall.

[0026] FIG. 8 is a side view of an alternative style center post having a threaded end and a flange for use in the hose pot shown in FIG. 7.

[0027] FIG. 9 is a side view of a plug that can be used with the hose pot shown in FIG. 7 when the center post is removed.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0028] In describing a preferred embodiment of the invention illustrated in the drawings, specific terminology will be resorted to for the sake of clarity. However, the invention is not intended to be limited to the specific terms so selected, and it is to be understood that each specific term includes all technical equivalents which operate in a similar manner to accomplish a similar purpose.

[0029] As shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 4, the present invention includes a hose pot 10 having a generally flat base wall 26 and a removable center post, generally designated by reference numeral 12, which extends vertically upward from the base wall 26. The hose pot 10 is shown as being generally spherical in shape, but the pot can be cylindrical, square, rectangular, or virtually any other shape. The hose pot 10 may be made of metal, plastic, or any other material suitable for outdoor use and water exposure.

[0030] The removable center post 12 includes an upwardly extending member 14 with a flange 16 at the base thereof as shown in FIG. 3. The upwardly extending member or post 14 is preferably about two-thirds the height H of the hose pot from the base 26 to the upper edge 27, as best seen in FIG. 4. The center post 12 may be cylindrical as shown, but may also be square in cross section, oval, or other shapes as would be understood by persons of skill in the art. Preferably the post has a cap 18 on the top to keep out water and/or debris if the post is hollow, but the cap is not required. In addition, the post may be solid in construction, or hollow and filled with a material to prevent unwanted collection of water and debris within the post. As a further alternative, the post could be made of perforated material to allow water to drain out of the center of the post. Therefore, all constructions of an upwardly extending support member 14 around which a hose or a portion of a hose may be wound when not in use are intended to be included within the scope of the present invention.

[0031] The flange 16 is generally perpendicular to the post and preferably extends outwardly from the post 14 approximately one inch; smaller or larger flanges could also be used. Preferably, the flange 16 completely encircles the post as shown in FIGS. 1-3 and may be welded or otherwise affixed to the base of the post.

[0032] According to a first embodiment, the flange 16 is provided with a plurality of apertures 20 for receiving fastening elements 22. The base 26 of the hose pot 10 is similarly provided with correspondingly spaced apertures 24 to align with the flange apertures 20 and receive the fastening elements 22 and allow the flange and center post to be secured to the base 26 of the pot 10. Preferably, the flange apertures 20 and pot base apertures 24 are evenly spaced around the center post. While three aligned flange and base pot apertures 20, 24 are shown, more or fewer fastening points could be provided as necessary or desired for a given hose pot design. The fastening elements 22 may be screws 30 as shown in FIG. 5,

or may be bolts or other elements used for attachment as would be known by persons of ordinary skill in the art.

[0033] Alternatively, the flange 16 could be embodied as a plurality of tabs 160 which are a continuation of the base of the post 14, turned up to extend laterally as shown in FIG. 6. According to this embodiment, the tabs are secured to the base 26 by locking the tabs into clips 130 on the pot base 26. Therefore, the post is mounted in the pot 10 by first orienting the post so that the tabs 160 are in offset relationship to the clips as shown by the phantom tabs 132. The post is then rotated clockwise to lock the tabs 160 under the clips 130 as is shown in FIG. 6.

[0034] The base 26 of the pot 10 is preferably provided with feet 32 that raise the pot off the floor and prevent the heads 34 of the fastening elements 22 from scratching the floor or other surface upon which the pot 10 is supported. Preferably, the screws 30 or other fastening elements have a plastic cap or acorn nut 36 as shown in FIG. 5. The base 26 of the 10 pot may also include drain holes 40 as shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 6.

[0035] An alternative embodiment of a hose pot, generally designated by reference numeral 50, is shown in FIGS. 7-9. As representatively shown, the pot includes rectangular sides 52 and, in FIG. 7, one of the sides has not been shown in order to depict the center of the pot 50. However, as in the first embodiment, the pot may be any shape.

[0036] In the alternative embodiment, which is not preferred, the pot 50 is configured with a cylindrical threaded opening 54 in the base wall 56. The post 58 has a complementarily threaded end 60 that is screwed into the base wall opening 54 to secure the post 58 vertically in the pot 50. The post 58 preferably includes a laterally extending flange 62 above the threaded end 60 that abuts the base wall 56 when the post has been fully screwed in and provides the post 58 with lateral support; a post 58 with such a flange 62 is shown in FIG. 8.

[0037] As in the first embodiment, when the post 58 is removed, the upper surface 66 of the base wall 56 is substantially flat. If desired a plug, generally designated by reference numeral 68, may be provided as shown in FIG. 9. The plug 68 has a threaded part 70 and a flat or slightly rounded top 72. The threaded part 70 is screwed into the opening 54 in the base wall 56 when the post 58 is removed. The plug 68 both covers and protects the threaded opening 54 from being damaged so that the post 58 may be readily re-mounted when desired. The alternative embodiment is preferably made of plastic, but other materials or combinations of materials may be used as would be understood by persons of skill in the art.

[0038] While the plug 68 in FIG. 9 is shown with a top 72, the plug may be configured to be screwed in from the inside of the pot and then be even or recessed below the upper surface 66 of the base wall 56 when sufficiently tightened. In this configuration, the plug may conveniently be provided with a handle like that on a gas cap to allow the hose pot owner to grasp the plug and fully insert it even after the top of the plug has passed below the upper surface of the base wall 56.

[0039] As described herein, the hose pot of the present invention may be used effectively to contain and cover a hose, with the center post facilitating winding of the hose for storage within the pot. The design of the flanged center post allows the pot to be used for many alternative purposes by removing the center post, leaving the pot with a flat interior bottom surface and the interior of the pot completely unobstructed.

[0040] The foregoing descriptions and drawings should be considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. The invention may be configured in a variety of shapes and sizes and is not limited by the dimensions of the preferred embodiment. Numerous applications of the present invention will readily occur to those skilled in the art. Therefore, it is not desired to limit the invention to the specific examples disclosed or the exact construction and operation shown and described. Rather, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A hose pot comprising:
a pot having an enclosing side wall and a generally flat base wall having an upper surface; and
a post oriented generally vertically within said pot and removably connected to said base wall by a connecting structure, said connecting structure configured so that said base wall is flat on said upper surface when said connecting structure is disconnected and said post is removed from the pot.
2. The hose pot as set forth in claim 1, wherein said enclosing side wall is generally cylindrical.
3. The hose pot as set forth in claim 1, wherein said enclosing side wall includes four side panels forming four sides of a box.
4. The hose pot as set forth in claim 1, wherein said connecting structure includes a flange on a lower end of said post and extending generally perpendicular thereto, said flange being removably connected to and generally parallel with said base wall.
5. The hose pot as set forth in claim 4, further comprising a plurality of fastening elements, wherein said flange includes a plurality of apertures and said base wall includes a plurality of apertures, said flange apertures being aligned with respective base wall apertures and said fastening elements passing through the aligned apertures to secure the post and flange to the base wall.
6. The hose pot as set forth in claim 5, wherein said fastening elements are screws.
7. The hose pot as set forth in claim 1, wherein said pot base wall as a threaded opening therein, said connecting structure including a threaded end on said post that screws into the threaded opening to secure the post to the pot base wall.
8. The hose pot as set forth in claim 7, wherein said post includes a flange above and adjacent said threaded end, said flange being in abutment and generally parallel with said base wall when the post is fully screwed into said base wall opening.
9. The hose pot as set forth in claim 7, further comprising a removable plug having a threaded part that is screwed into said base wall opening when the post is removed to fill the opening.

10. A device for storing a hose and other items comprising:
a container having a sidewall structure and a base wall with an interior upper surface and an exterior lower surface, said sidewall structure extending upwardly from said base to define a container interior; and

a removable support member around which a hose may be wound, said support member being securable to the base wall and extending upwardly from the base wall interior upper surface when connected to the base wall, said container interior being unobstructed and said base wall interior upper surface being substantially flat when the support member is removed.

11. The storage device as set forth in claim 10, wherein said support member has a height of at least about two-thirds of a height of the container.

12. The storage device as set forth in claim 10, wherein said support member includes a post having a connecting structure at a lower end thereof that engages a cooperative connecting structure on said base wall to secure the post to the base wall.

13. The storage device as set forth in claim 12, wherein said connecting structure includes a flange on a lower end of said post and extending generally perpendicular thereto, said flange being removably connected to said base wall and generally parallel with said base wall interior upper surface.

14. The storage device as set forth in claim 13, further comprising a plurality of fastening elements, wherein said flange includes a plurality of apertures and said base wall includes a plurality of apertures, said flange apertures being aligned with respective base wall apertures and said fastening elements passing through the aligned apertures to secure the post and flange to the base wall.

15. The storage device as set forth in claim 14, wherein said fastening elements are screws.

16. The storage device as set forth in claim 12, wherein said base wall has a threaded opening therein, said connecting structure including a threaded end on said post that screws into the threaded opening to secure the post to the base wall.

17. The storage device as set forth in claim 16, wherein said post includes a flange above and adjacent said threaded end, said flange being in abutment with said base wall interior upper surface when the post is fully screwed into said base wall opening.

18. The storage device as set forth in claim 10, wherein said exterior lower surface of said base wall includes a plurality of feet that space said exterior lower surface of said base wall at a distance from an underlying surface upon which said storage device is supported.

19. The storage device as set forth in claim 10, wherein said exterior lower surface of said base wall includes drain holes.

20. The storage device as set forth in claim 16, further comprising a removable plug having a threaded part that is screwed into said base wall opening when the post is removed to fill the opening.

* * * * *