United States Patent [19]

Hayes

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[54] **BATHROOM VANITY CABINET**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.**..... **312/223,** 312/224, 312/245

[51] **Int. Cl.**. **A47b 77/08,** A47b 67/00, A47b 67/02

[58] **Field of Search** 312/223, 227, 242, 245; 109/50

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

Disclosed is a novel article of manufacture comprising a bathroom vanity cabinet having novel features of construction and possessing therefore particular advantages that make it attractive and useful to its owners or users. The problem of dealing with a small and possibly unsightly existing cabinet is dealt with by providing a larger structure having in a rear portion thereof an opening enabling it merely to be set in place over the existing cabinet. The new cabinet may be considerably larger, providing a larger mirror or mirrors, better lighting, more storage space for health and beauty aids, better electric-outlet availability, etc. The new cabinet has its own wiring system, with a plug that connects to the electrical system of the existing cabinet.

7 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures

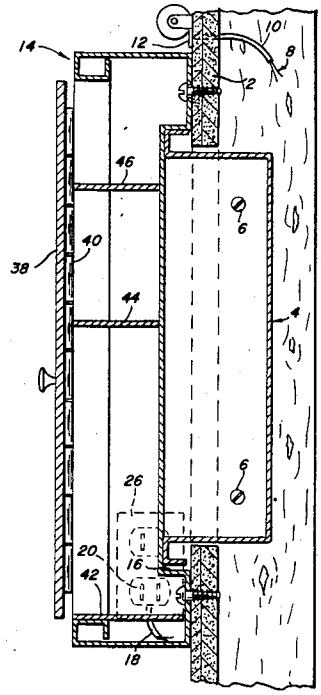


FIG. 2

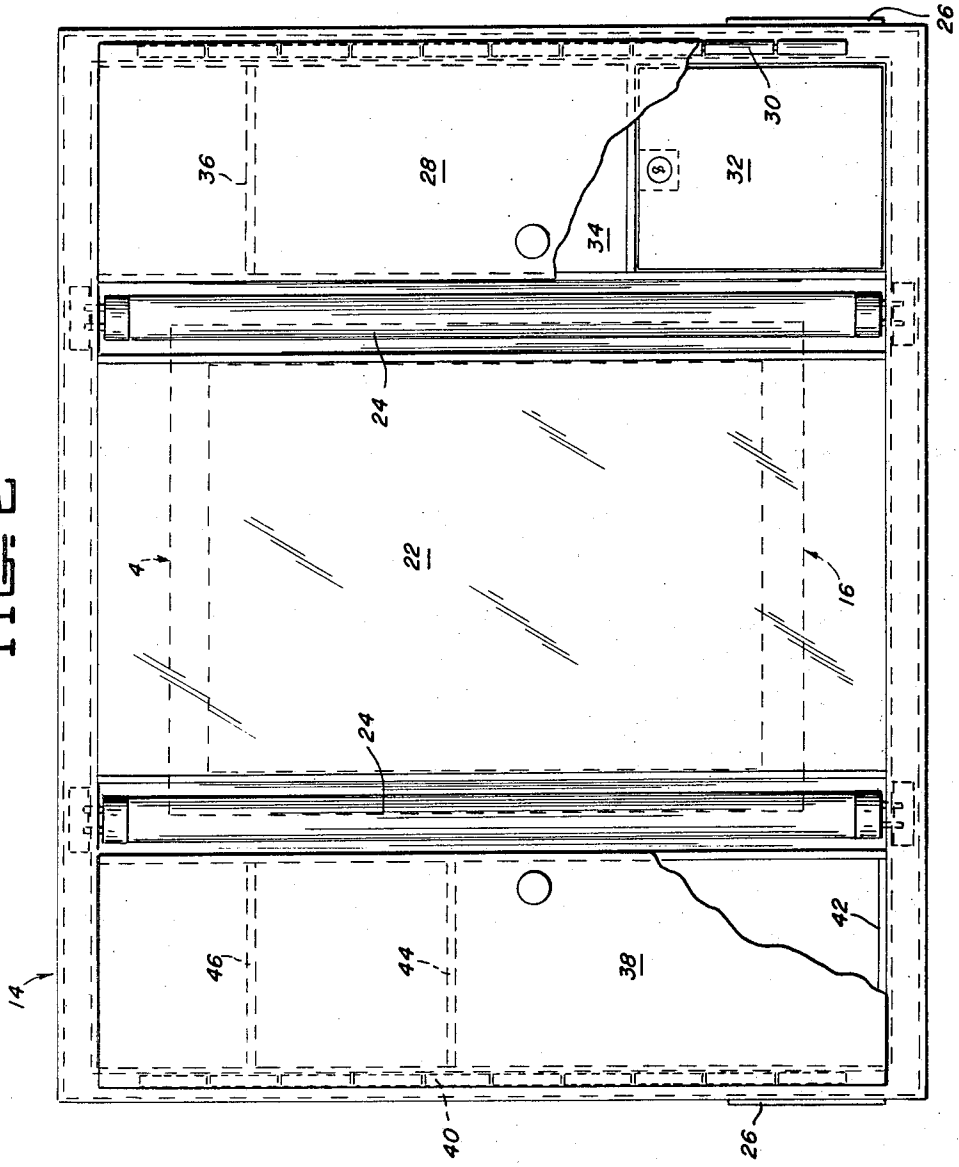
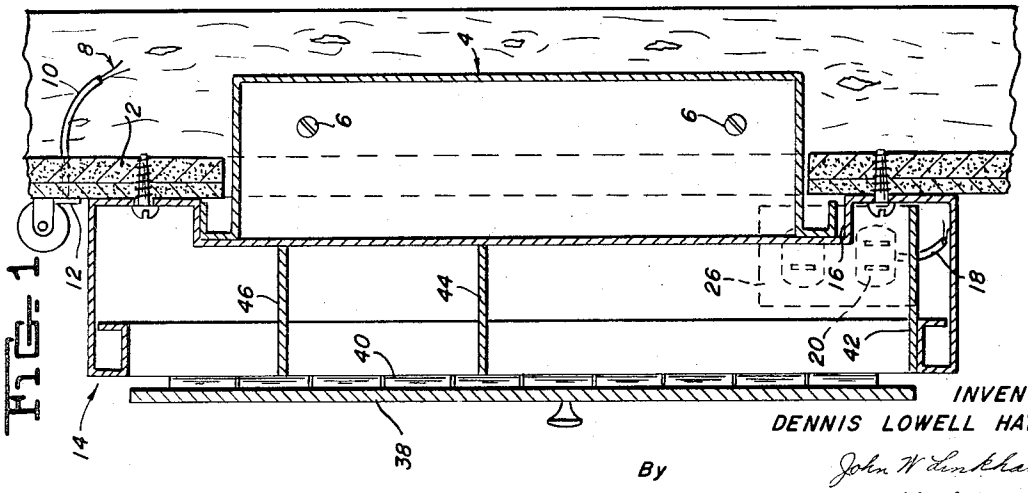


FIG. 1



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FIG. 3

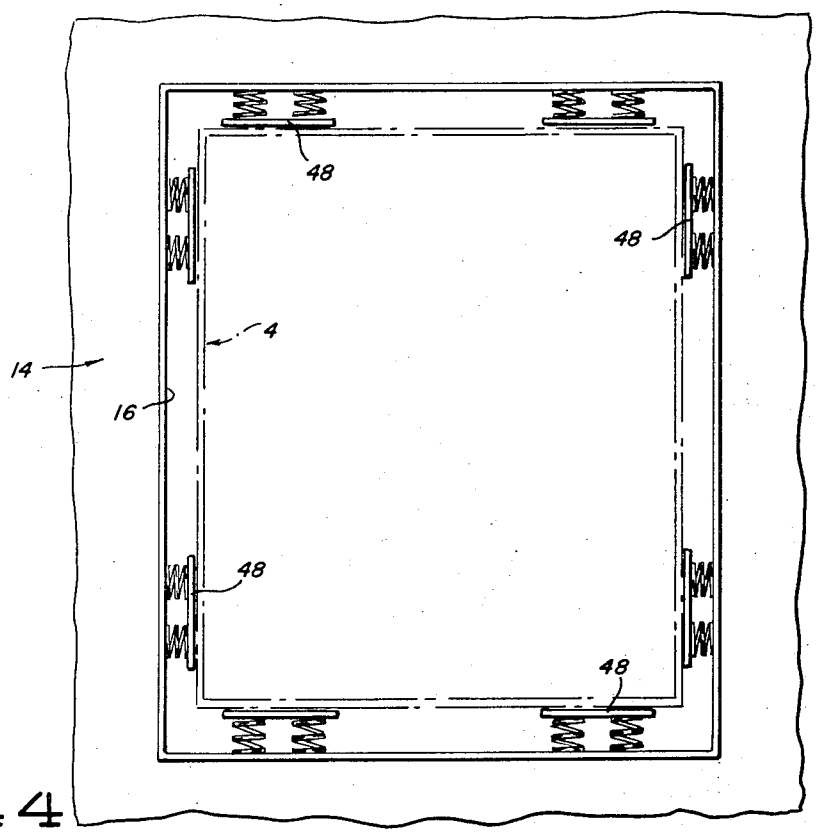


FIG. 4

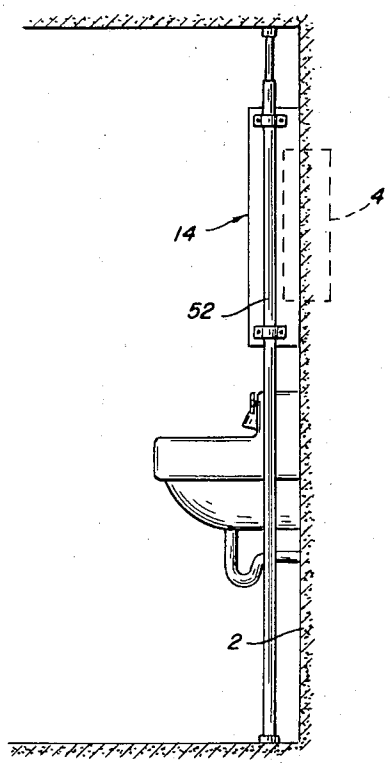
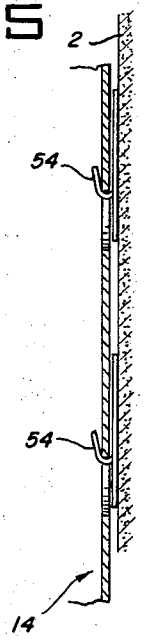


FIG. 5



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BATHROOM VANITY CABINET

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention: This invention relates to bathroom cabinets and the like.

2. Description of the Prior Art: Bathroom-cabinet structures of many kinds are known, but it is believed that the known structures all lack the particular features of the instant invention, because they were not designed with thought being given to the problems that it is intended to overcome by means of the instant invention.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Existing cabinets often have many disadvantages: small overall size, unstylish appearance, inadequate storage space for health and beauty aids, small mirrors, poor lighting, poor electric-outlet availability, lack of locked storage space for drugs of dangerous nature, etc. Prior to the instant invention, a considerable part of the cost of renovating a bathroom has been necessarily accounted for the cost of the skilled labor required to remove the existing small cabinet and affix to the wall its replacement. According to the invention, there is provided a cabinet having desired modern features, but with an opening in its rear portion that enables it merely to be set into place over an existing cabinet, which a householder may do readily, even without tools. The new cabinet has its own wiring system, terminating in a plug by which it is attached to the electrical system of the existing cabinet.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A complete understanding of the invention may be obtained from the foregoing and the following description thereof, taken together with the appended drawings, in which:

FIG. **1** is a schematic sectional elevation view, showing an existing wall and cabinet and, thereover, a structure in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. **2** is a front elevation view, partly broken away to reveal interior features, of one embodiment of the instant invention;

FIG. **3** comprises a rear view of a cabinet of the invention, in one embodiment;

FIG. **4** indicates, in part, another embodiment of the instant invention; and

FIG. **5** indicates, in part, still another embodiment of the instant invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring to FIG. **1**, there is shown in schematic sectional elevation view an existing wall **2**, to which an existing cabinet **4** is affixed by means such as screws **6**. As is further indicated schematically in FIG. **1**, the existing cabinet **4** is provided with (or has associated with it, e.g., in an overhead lamp) electrical power from a source **8** through a power-supply line **10**, which terminates in an existing outlet **12**. The foregoing describes existing structure, over which the structure of the instant invention is put.

Indicated in FIG. **1**, there is a structure **14** that comprises the cabinet of the instant invention. As is indicated at **16**, it comprises in its rear portion an opening or cavity that enables it to be placed over the cabinet **4**. As an essential feature, it comprises an electric supply line **18** that terminates in a plug **20** and the outlet **12** mentioned above.

The nature of the structure **14**, in its particulars beyond those mentioned above, will not be described herein in great detail, since it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that a cabinet of modern design may be made, in accordance with the needs and wishes of the user and the extent to which he is prepared to pay to have them fulfilled, to incorporate various ones of the desirable features indicated hereinbelow—perhaps just a few of them, and perhaps most.

It is known that a typical old-style medicine cabinet tends to be deficient, from the point of view of someone of modern tastes and habits, in many ways.

In general, its small overall size tends to cause it to have inadequate storage space for the great number of health and beauty aids (powders, creams, lotions, vitamins, antiseptics, bandages, dentifrices, shaving equipment, analgesics, deodorants, laxatives, cosmetics, etc.) that are to be found in the ordinary household. In households of modest affluence there are further to be found such devices as electric toothbrushes and irrigators, hair dryers, etc., that are space-consuming to store.

Beyond that, a typical old-fashioned medicine cabinet is in many instances deficient in its mirror area, its lighting, and its provision for the use of electricity, e.g., to operate simultaneously more than one or at the most two power-consuming devices (shaver, electric toothbrush, etc.). Moreover, in view of the position of poisoning as a major one of the causes of death of young children, it is desirable to provide in many instances a locked storage space for the keeping of substances dangerous to children. The ideas advanced above, together with such others as may suggest themselves, indicate the desirability to a modern householder of having a cabinet of modern dimensions and capabilities. As has been indicated above, however, it has in many instances been a matter too costly to be practical to provide a cabinet of such nature. This is particularly true with respect to rental units, where the modernization of a bathroom in just one of a number of units is (from the point of view of the landlord) obviously not feasible. It will be appreciated, even from the foregoing description, however, that the instant invention will provide to a tenant in such a rental unit the option of buying his own cabinet, with the possibility of taking it with him upon the termination of the lease, while leaving the premises substantially in the condition in which he found them. Moreover, the unit cost, as installed, of a structure **14** having a given set of ones of the features indicated above, is obviously lower than that of such a new cabinet, permanently installed with the use of skilled labor.

It should be pointed out that the use of the invention is not necessarily to be limited to the replacement market; it will in some instances be desirable, in new construction, to affix to a bathroom wall a dummy block or other suitable mounting means that contains an electric-power outlet, with the thought that the owner will provide a cabinet suited to his needs. Upon his removal, he could take his cabinet with him, leaving a proper place for a new owner to put a cabinet suited to his own needs, which may be different.

Having indicated above the general idea of the instant invention, I shall describe hereinbelow one particular embodiment of the invention, with the idea that

such an embodiment is not to be construed in a limiting sense, but rather as merely illustrative of the possibilities of the instant invention.

Referring now to FIG. **2**, there is shown in front elevation view, with portions of the doors being broken away to reveal interior features, one embodiment of the instant invention. As is seen from FIG. **2**, a central portion of the structure **14** may be occupied by a mirror **22** of substantial extent, flanked by adequate lighting fixtures **24** and a plurality of electrical outlets **26**. To the right of the mirror **22**, the cabinet **14** has a door **28**, hinged at **30**, that opens to reveal (shown by breaking away a part of the door) a locked-storage drawer **32**, a tall area **34** for storing electric-toothbrush equipment (not shown) or taller containers, and at the top, a shelf **36** for receiving smaller items. To the left of the mirror **22**, the cabinet **14** has a door **38**, hinged as at **40**, that opens to reveal shelves **42**, **44**, and **46**. The shelf **42** (at the bottom) receives taller containers; the other shelves **44** and **46** take smaller containers.

As was pointed out above, the foregoing is merely illustrative, with many and various different arrangements being possible.

Reference will now be made to FIG. **3**, which is a rear view of a cabinet **14** embodying a further optional but desirable feature of the instant invention in one of its possible embodiments. As can be seen, the opening or cavity **16** has associated with its sides some suitable means, such as spring-loaded contact plates **48**, that serve to secure the cabinet apparatus **14** to the existing cabinet **4**, making it possible to obtain readily a good fit, despite some variation in the dimensions of the existing cabinet **4** that is to be covered.

Referring now to FIG. **4**, there is indicated another embodiment of the instant invention, an embodiment that has (as will be seen) particular advantages that are peculiar to it because of its characterizing feature. In this embodiment, the cabinet comprises means **50** for grasping spring-pole means **52** that may run either from floor to ceiling or from sink top to ceiling. With this embodiment, the novel cabinet may be supported regardless of its size and weight, no limitation thereupon being imposed by the strength of means used to secure to the wall **2** the existing cabinet **4**. Moreover, such spring-pole mounting leaves no trace of change when it and the cabinet which it supports are removed.

Referring now to FIG. **5**, there is indicated still another embodiment of the invention, in accordance with which the structure **14** is supported by adhesive hanger-hook means **54**, which may be of the kind that are commercially available and relatively inexpensive and used for supporting mirrors, pictures, clocks, and the like. Such adhesive hanger-hook means are sometimes limited in their weight-supporting abilities and have been known to fail, with unfavorable results upon the object supported; it is important (when this form of the invention is practiced) to allow an adequate safety factor, such as about 5:1. The strongest adhesive hanger-hook means usually have a rated capacity of about 50 pounds. From the foregoing, considering the probable as-loaded weight of the structure **14**, it will be possible to calculate the number of such means **54** to be used.

Still another means for supporting in place the structure **14** will suggest themselves to those skilled in the art. Among these there may be mentioned extensible legs and ceiling-mounted suction cups plus cables or chains.

What is not to be lost sight of is the essential feature of the instant invention, namely, that the novel structure **14** comprises in a rear (toward the wall) portion an opening or hollow that permits it to be placed conveniently so as to hide and supplant an existing cabinet.

While I have shown and described herein a certain number of embodiments of my invention, I intend to cover as well any change therein that may be made without departing from its spirit and scope.

I claim as my invention:

1. Cabinet apparatus comprising a member having opposed front and rear portions, said rear portion having therein an opening of such dimensions as to enable it to be set in place over an existing medicine cabinet or the like, said existing cabinet having electrical-supply means, and said apparatus having its own electrical system and means for connecting it to said electrical-supply means, said opening containing means therein for securing said apparatus to said existing medicine cabinet.

2. Apparatus as defined in claim **1**, characterized in that said apparatus further comprises a plurality of electrical-outlet means.

3. Apparatus as defined in claim **1**, characterized in that said means for securing said apparatus to said existing cabinet comprises a plurality of spring-loaded contact plates.

4. Apparatus as defined in claim **3**, characterized in that said apparatus further comprises a plurality of electrical-outlet means.

5. Cabinet apparatus comprising a member having opposed front and rear portions, said rear portion having therein an opening of such dimensions as to enable it to be set in place over an existing medicine cabinet or the like, said existing cabinet having electrical supply means, and said apparatus having its own electrical system and means for connecting it to said electrical supply means, means attached to said cabinet apparatus for supporting the weight of said cabinet apparatus, said last mentioned means being independent of said existing cabinet and supporting means therefor.

6. Apparatus as defined in claim **4**, characterized in that said means for supporting the weight of said cabinet apparatus comprises a plurality of spring-pole means and means associated with said cabinet apparatus for grasping said spring-pole means.

7. Apparatus as defined in claim **4**, characterized in that said means for supporting the weight of said cabinet apparatus comprises a plurality of adhesive hanger-hook means.

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