



US 20220331546A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**

MAURER et al.

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2022/0331546 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Oct. 20, 2022**

(54) **HUMIDIFICATION OF RESPIRATORY GASES**

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(21) Appl. No.: **17/857,282**

(22) Filed: **Jul. 5, 2022**

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 15/665,747, filed on Aug. 1, 2017, now Pat. No. 11,420,005, which is a continuation of application No. 13/584,133, filed on Aug. 13, 2012, now Pat. No. 9,737,682.
(60) Provisional application No. 61/522,763, filed on Aug. 12, 2011.

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**

A61M 16/16 (2006.01)

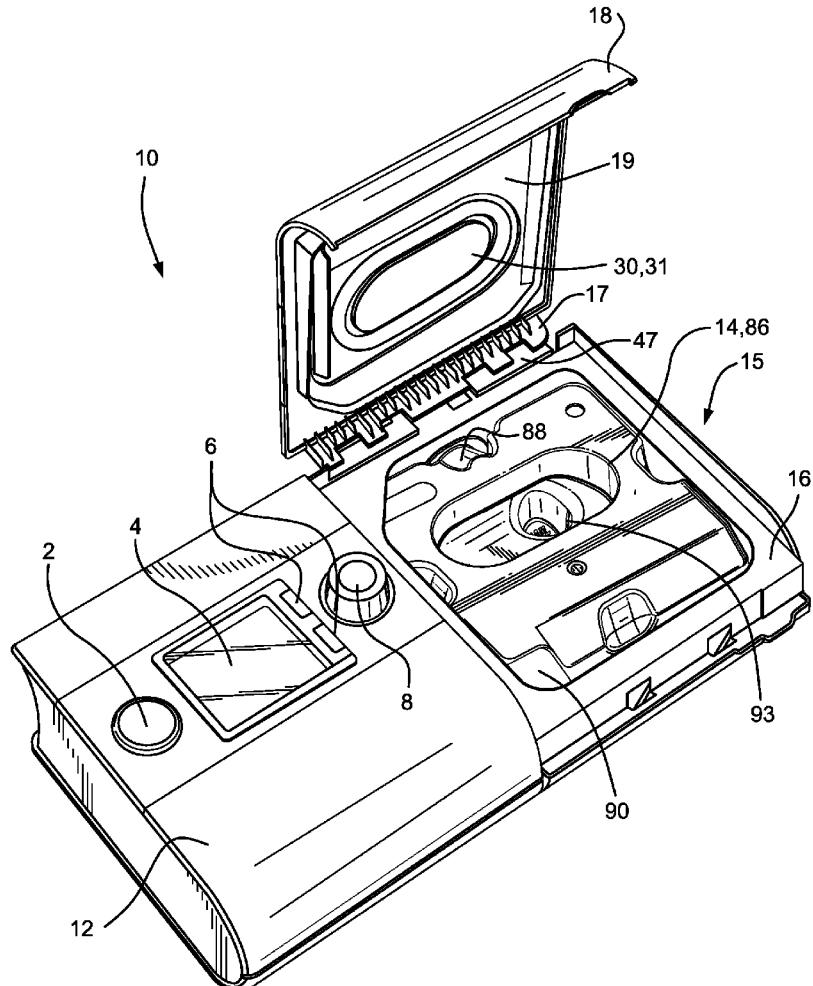
A61M 16/10 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC *A61M 16/16* (2013.01); *A61M 16/109* (2014.02); *A61M 2205/3379* (2013.01); *A61M 2205/3382* (2013.01); *A61M 2205/3386* (2013.01); *A61M 2205/3389* (2013.01); *A61M 2205/502* (2013.01); *A61M 2205/584* (2013.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A tub is configured to contain a supply of water and be inserted into a chamber of a humidifier. The tub includes a tub base configured to contain a supply of water and a tub lid connected to the tub base. The tub lid includes an inlet configured to receive a flow of breathable gas to be humidified and an outlet for the humidified flow of breathable gas. The tub further includes a water level indicator configured to indicate a level of the supply of water in the tub base. The water level indicator includes an inclined portion configured to direct the flow of breathable gas from the inlet away from the outlet. The water level indicator may be visible through the inlet.



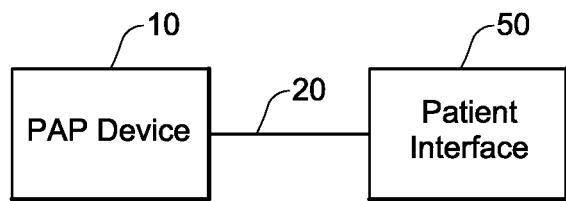


Fig. 1

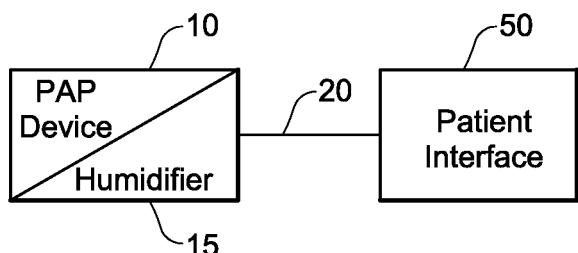


Fig. 2

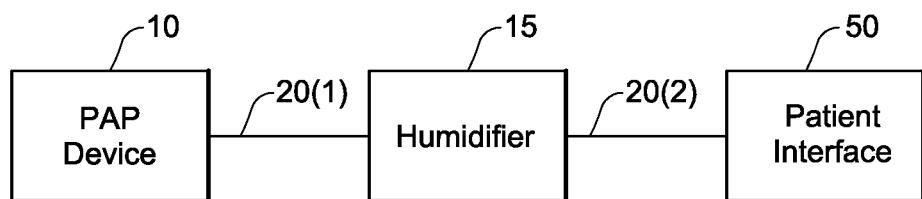


FIG. 3

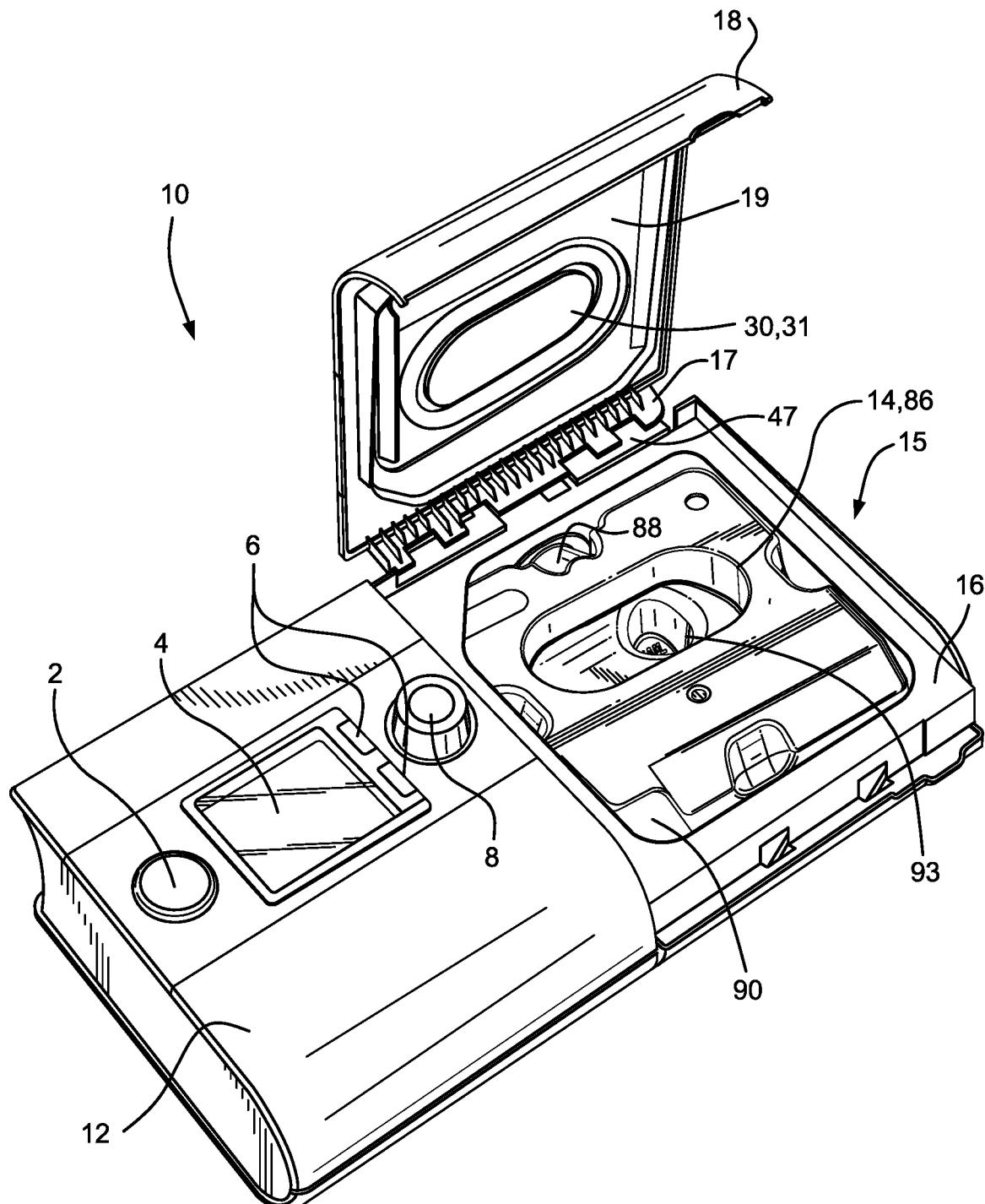


Fig. 4

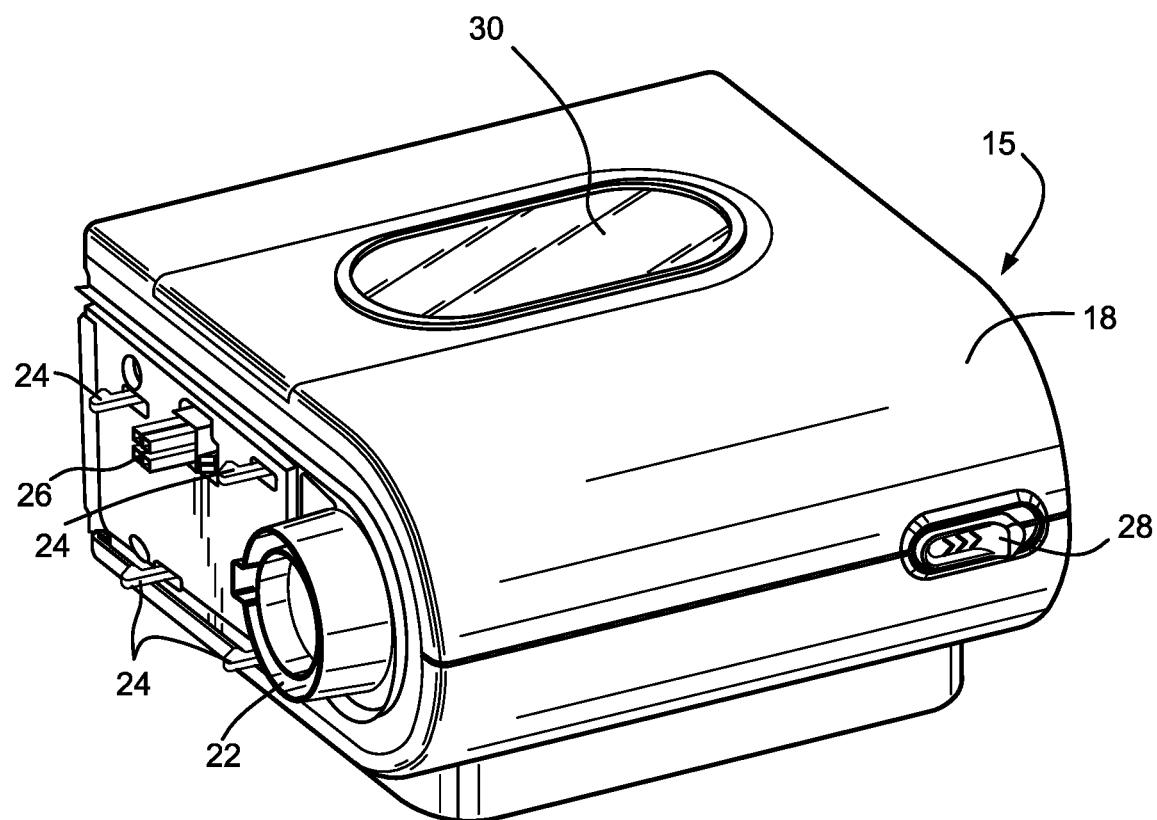


FIG. 5

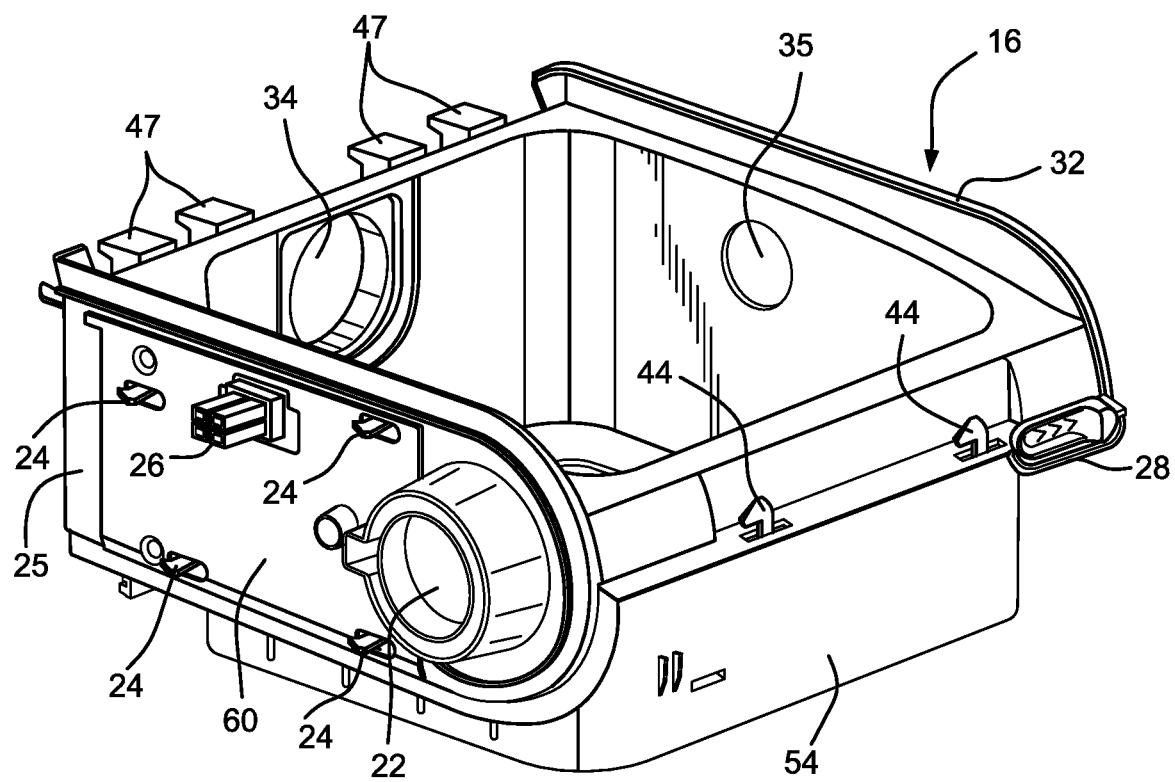


FIG. 6

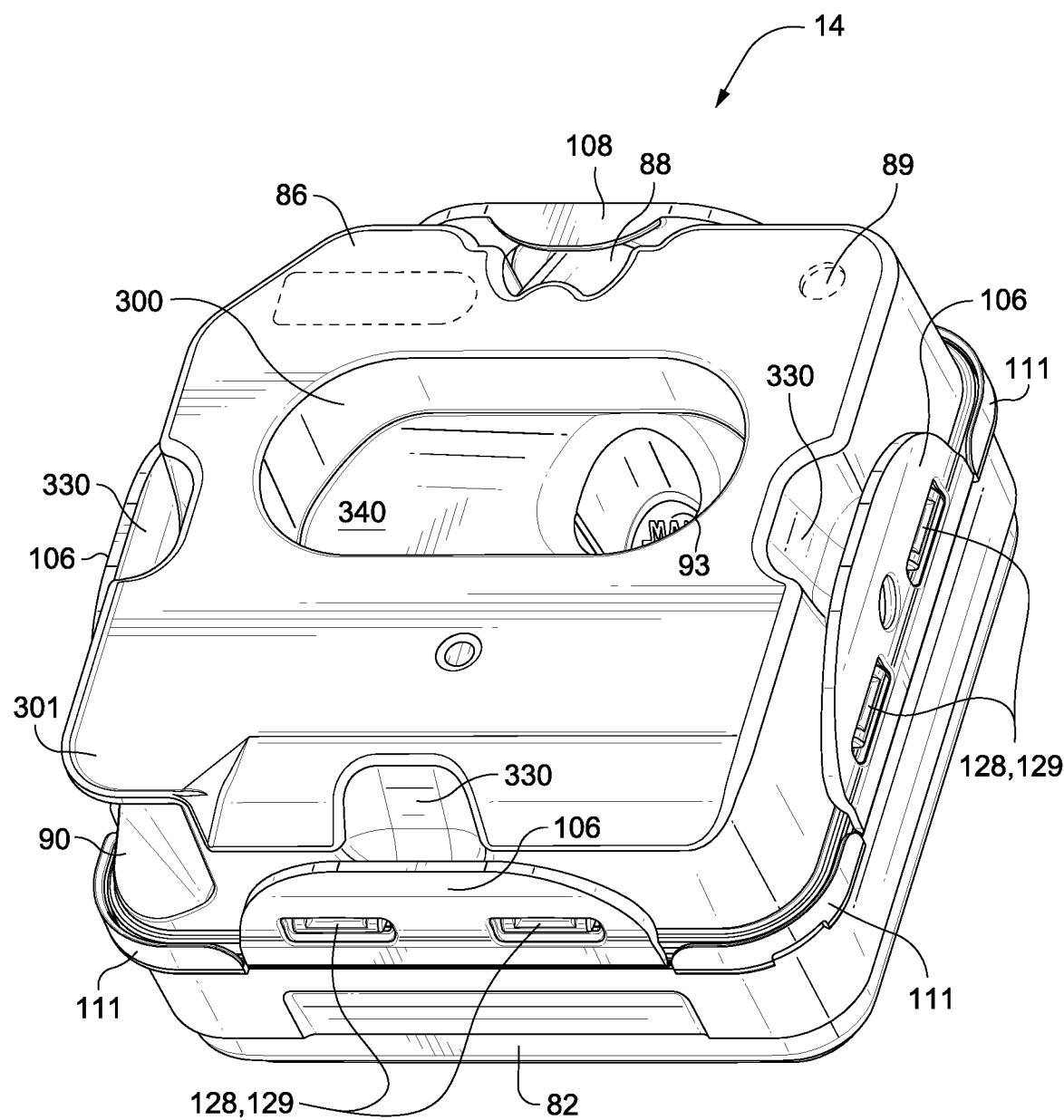


FIG. 7

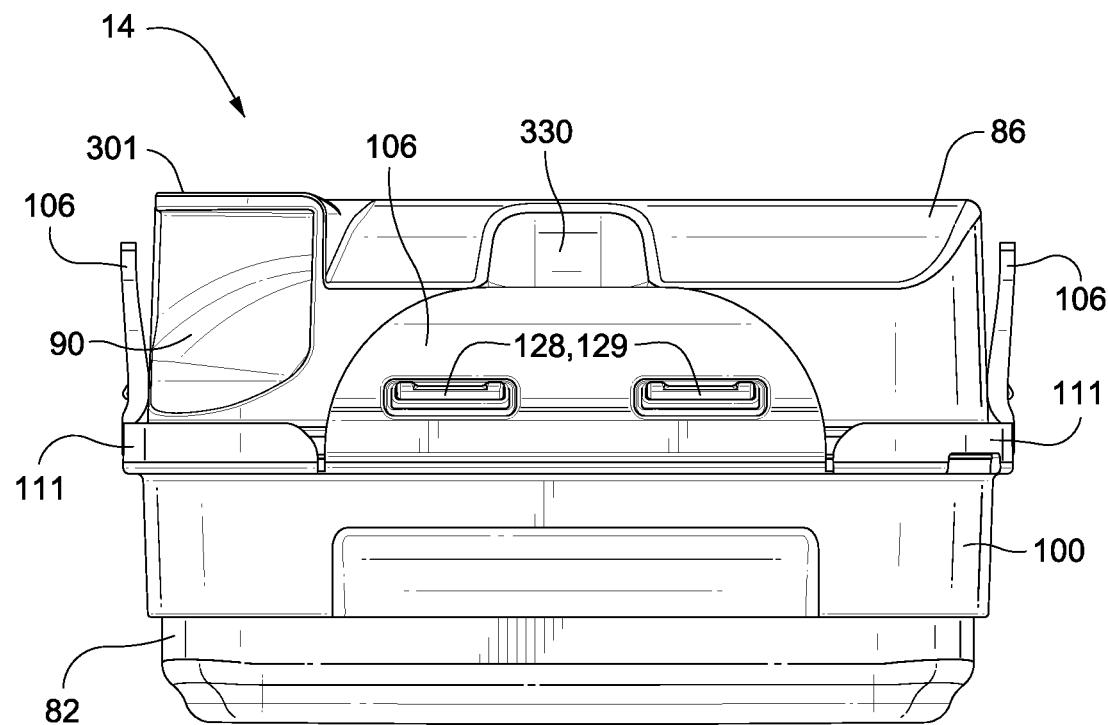


FIG. 8

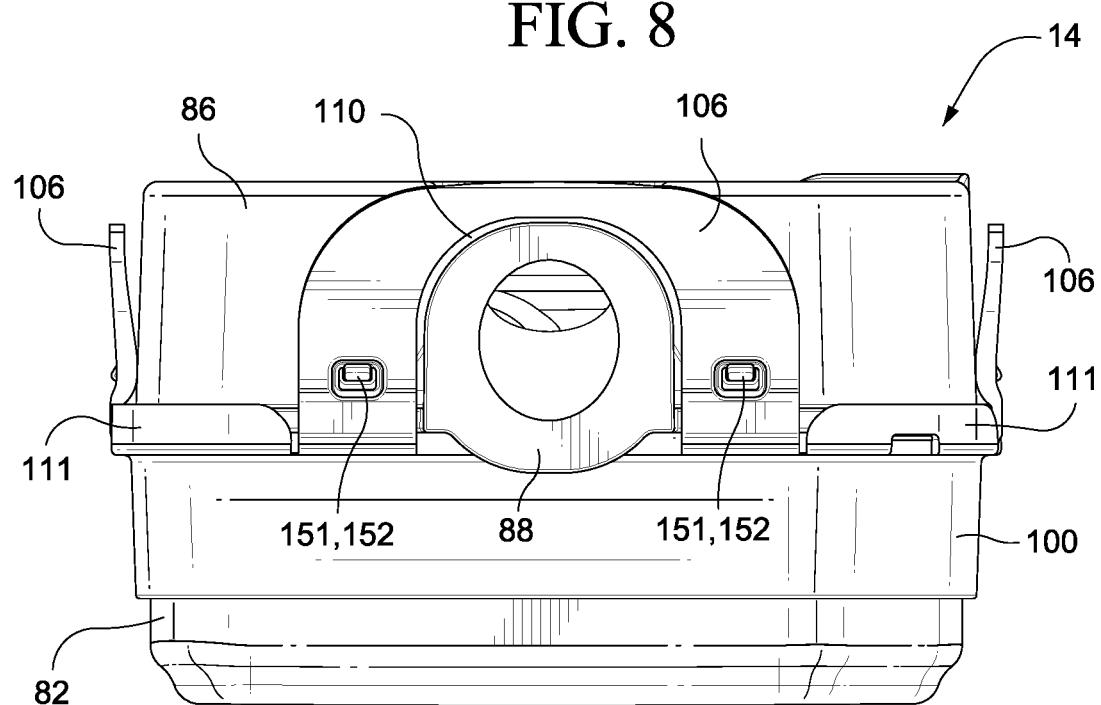
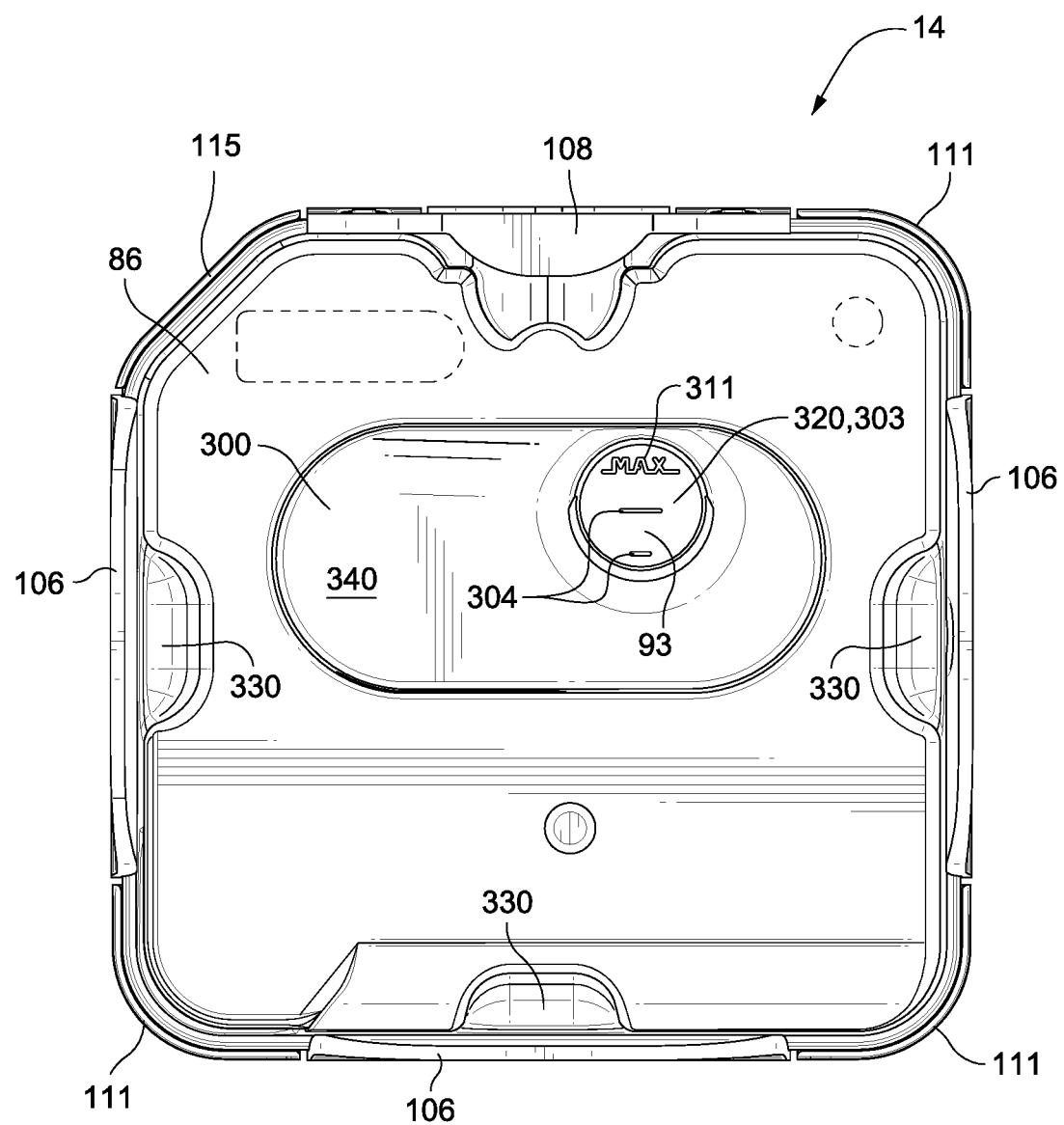


FIG. 9



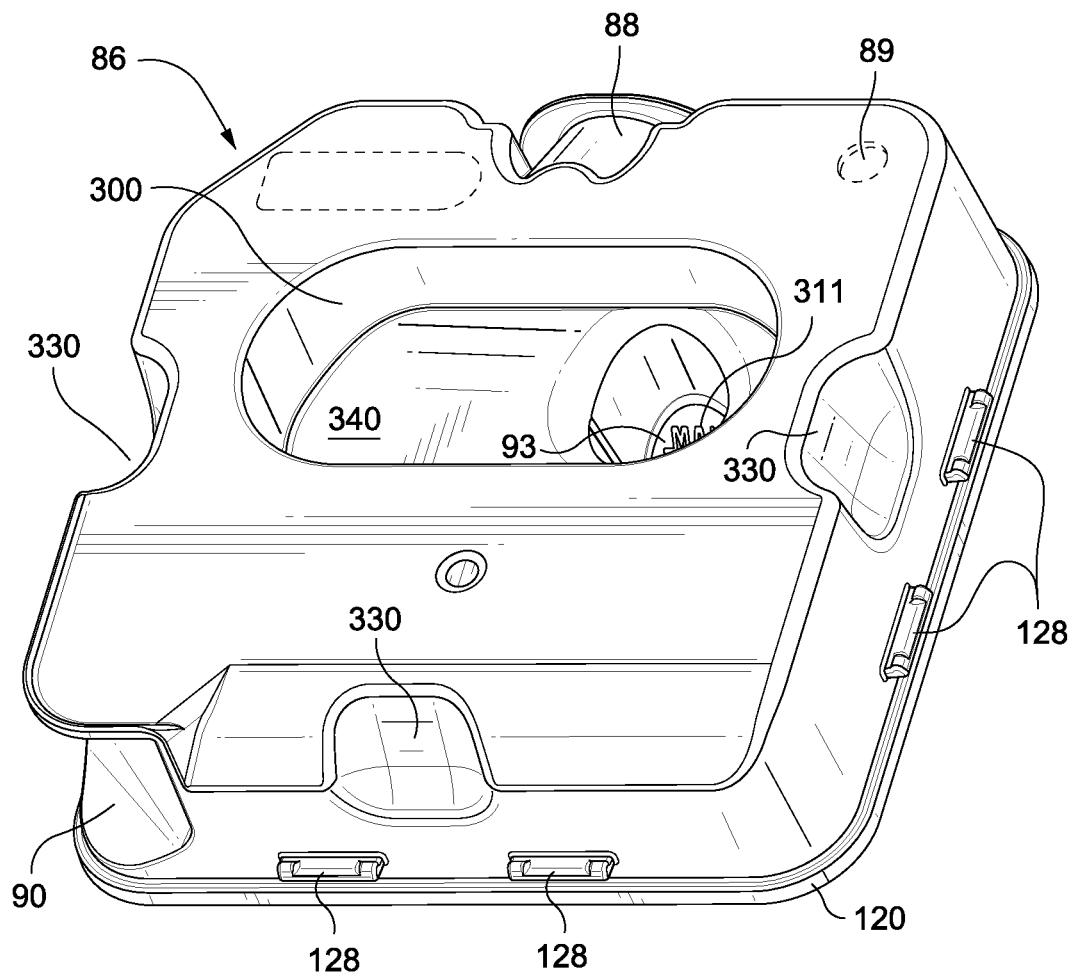
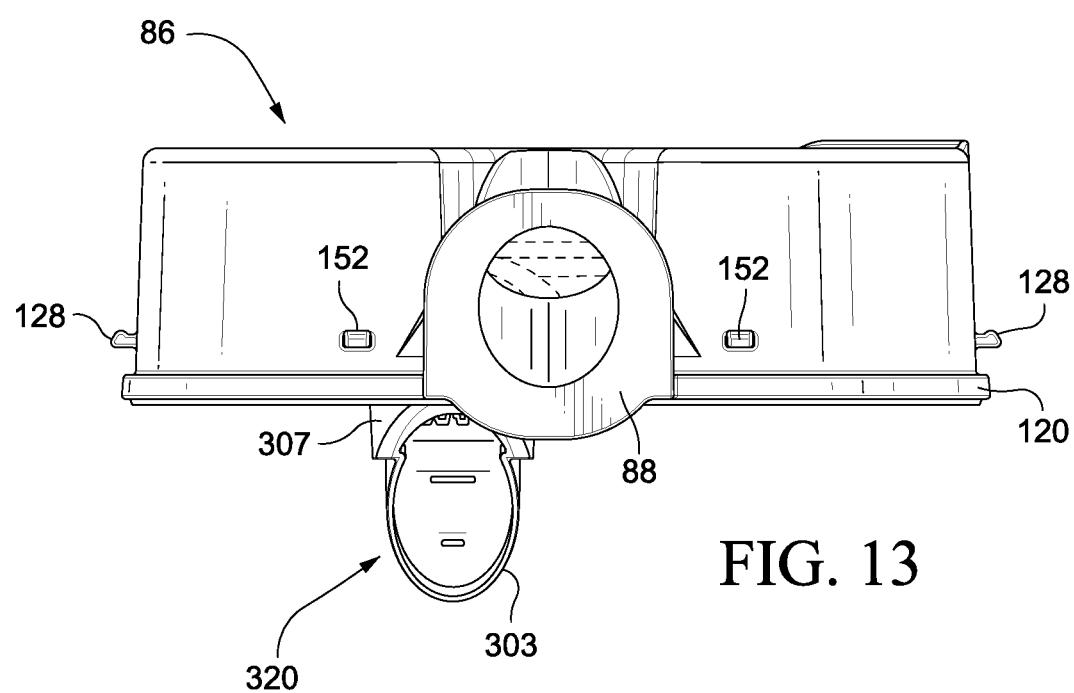
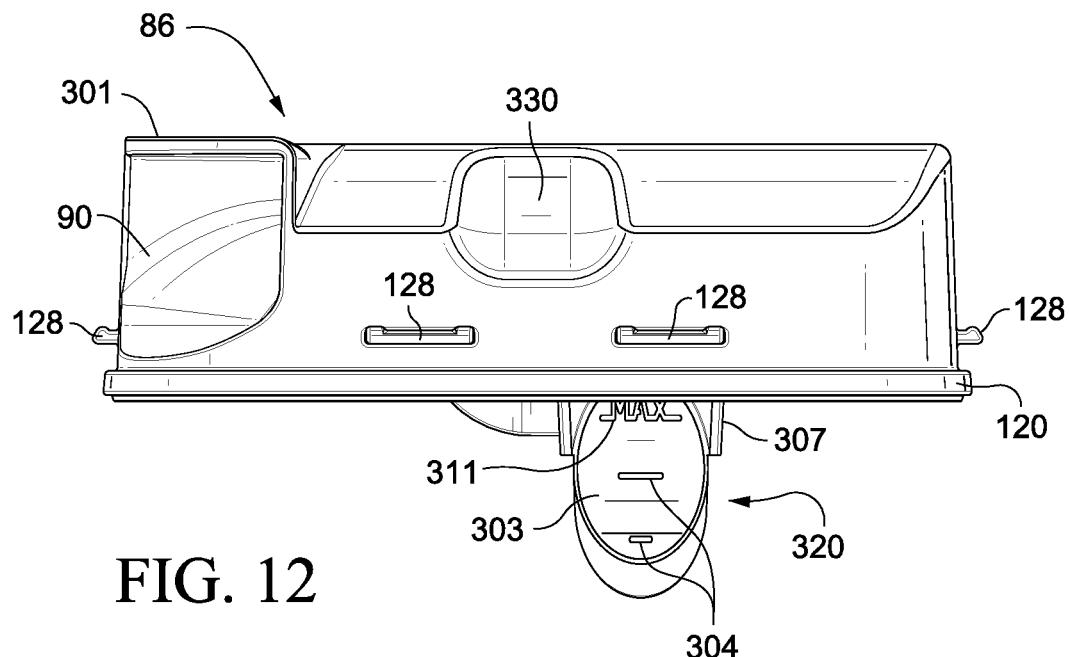


FIG. 11



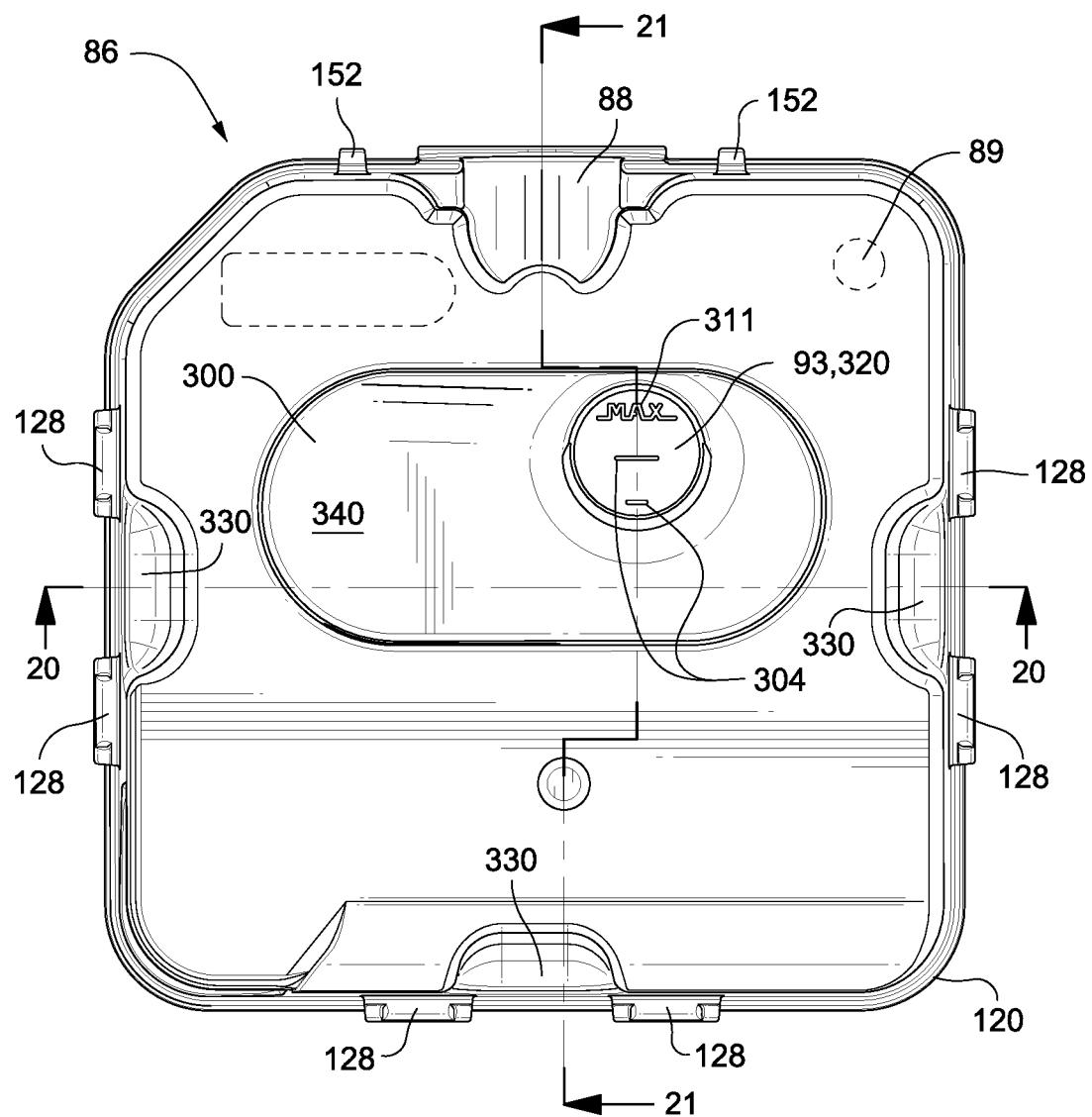


FIG. 14

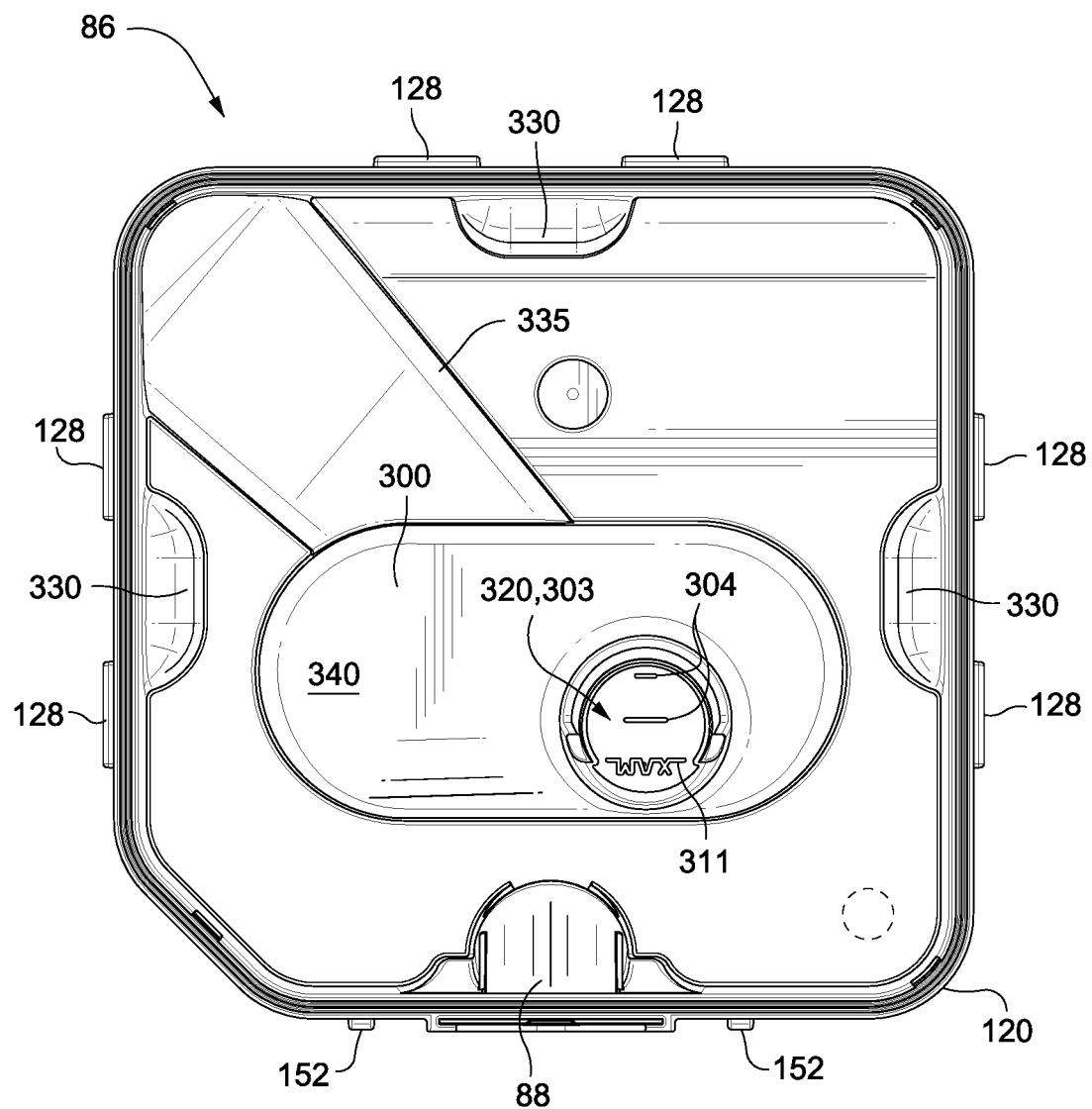


FIG. 15

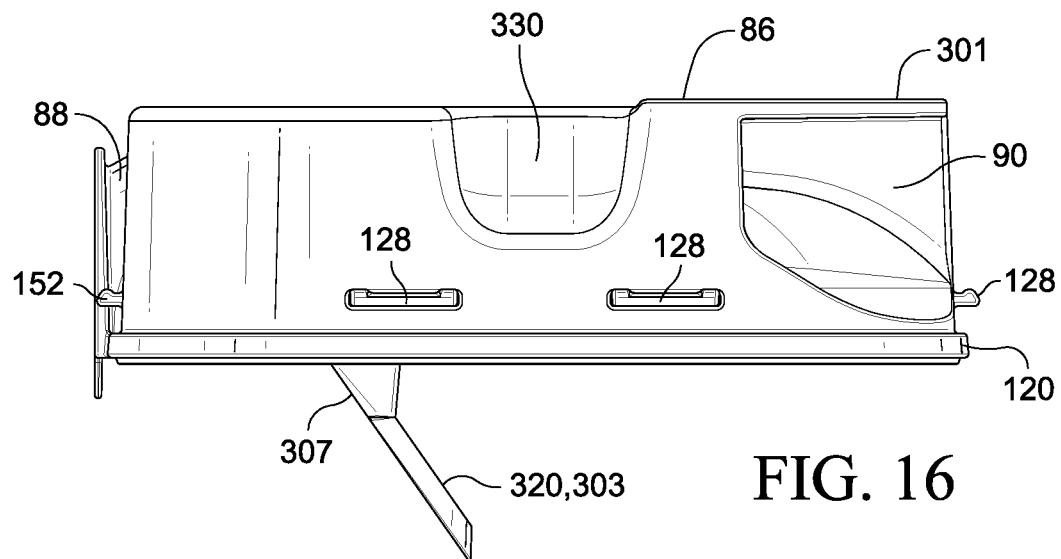


FIG. 16

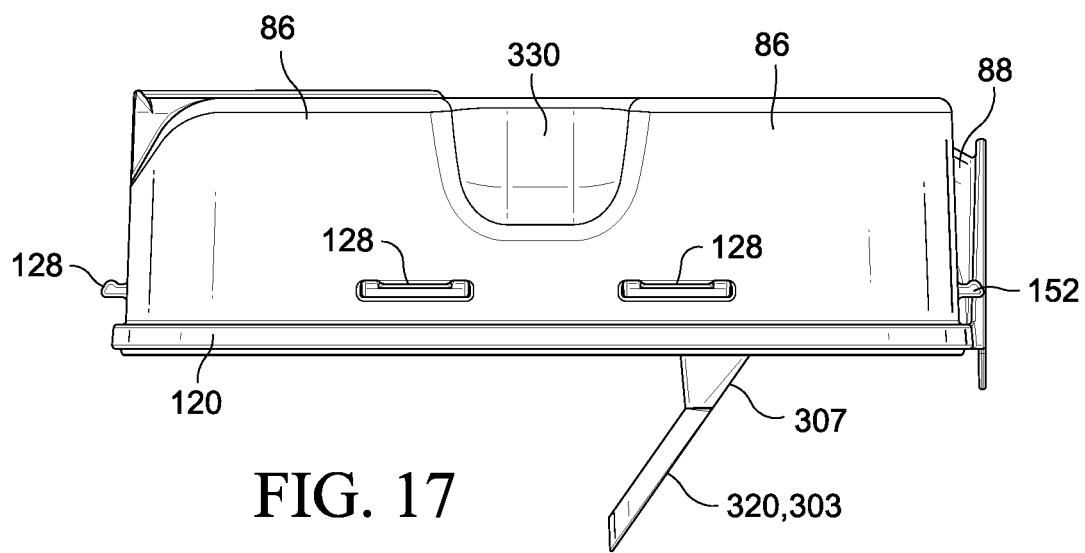


FIG. 17

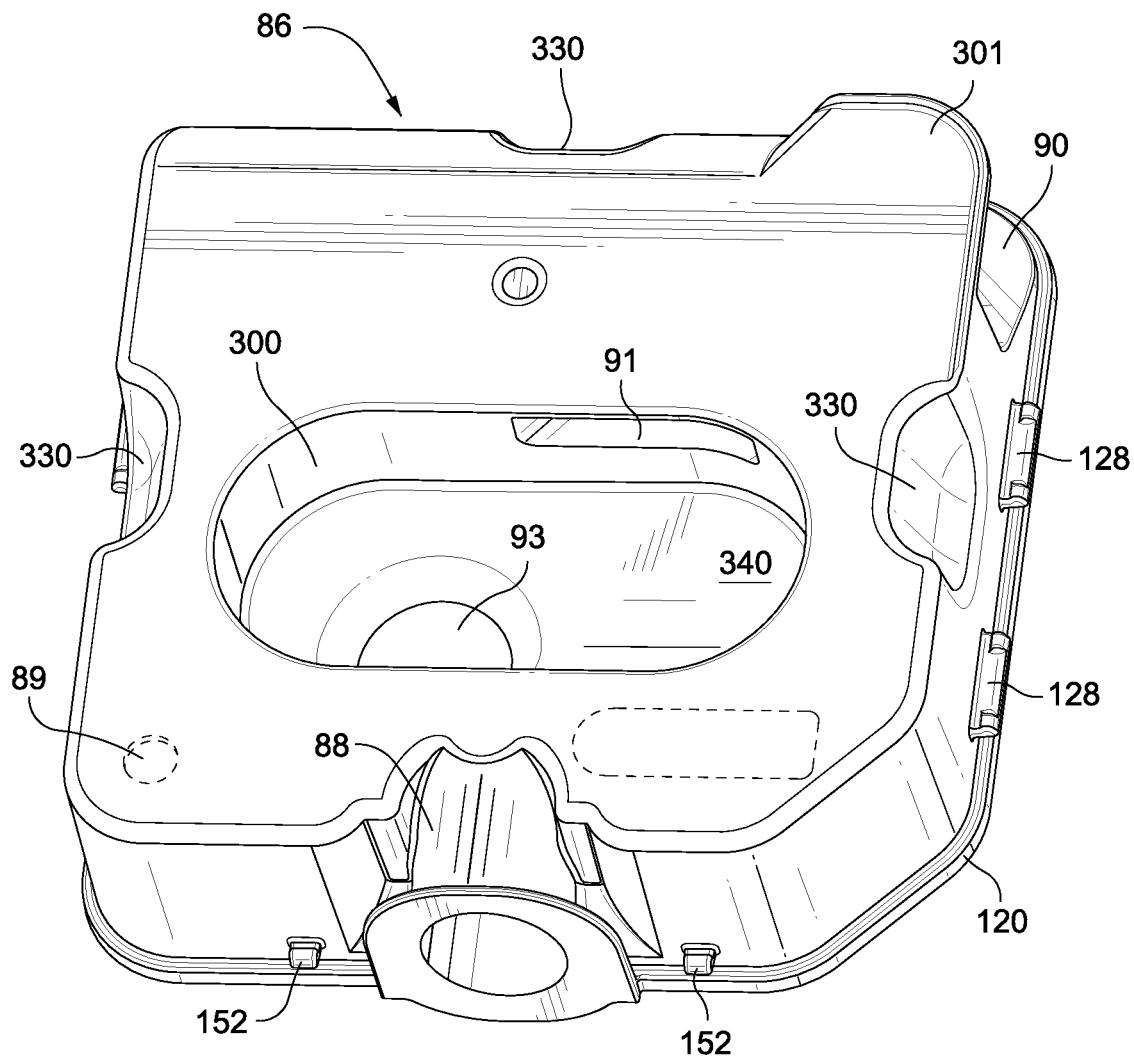


FIG. 18

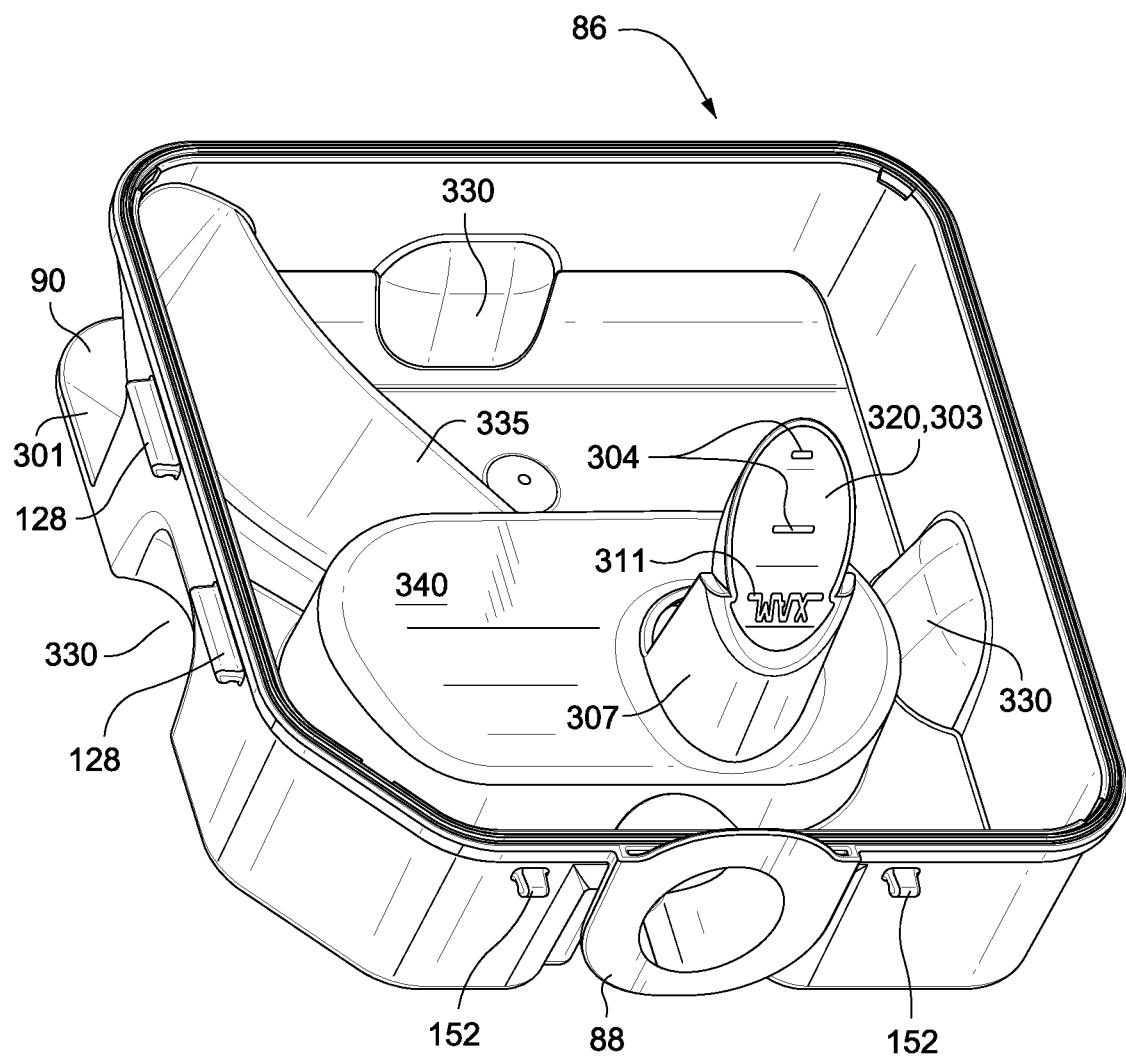


FIG. 19

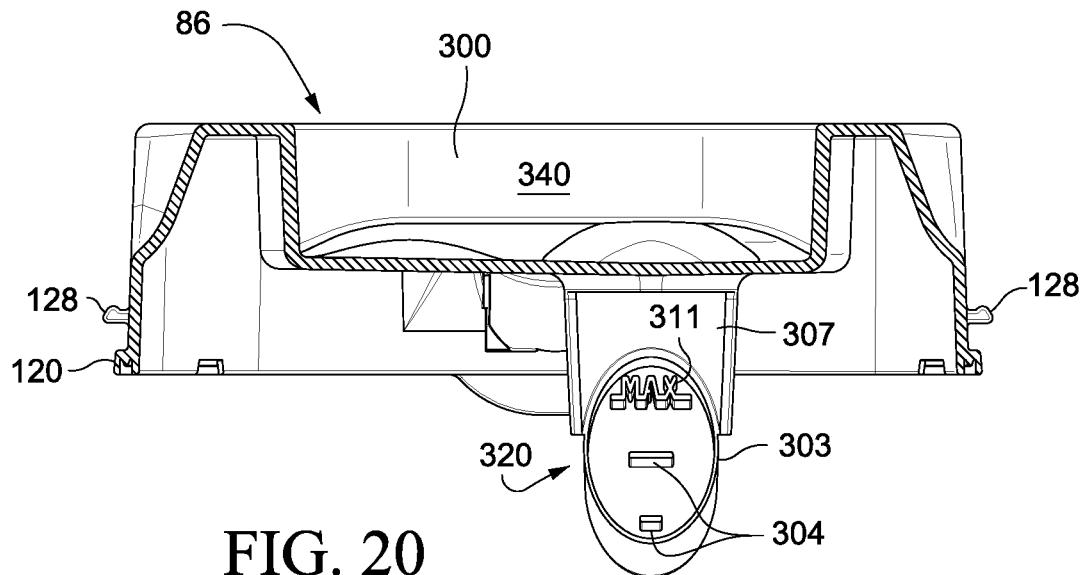


FIG. 20

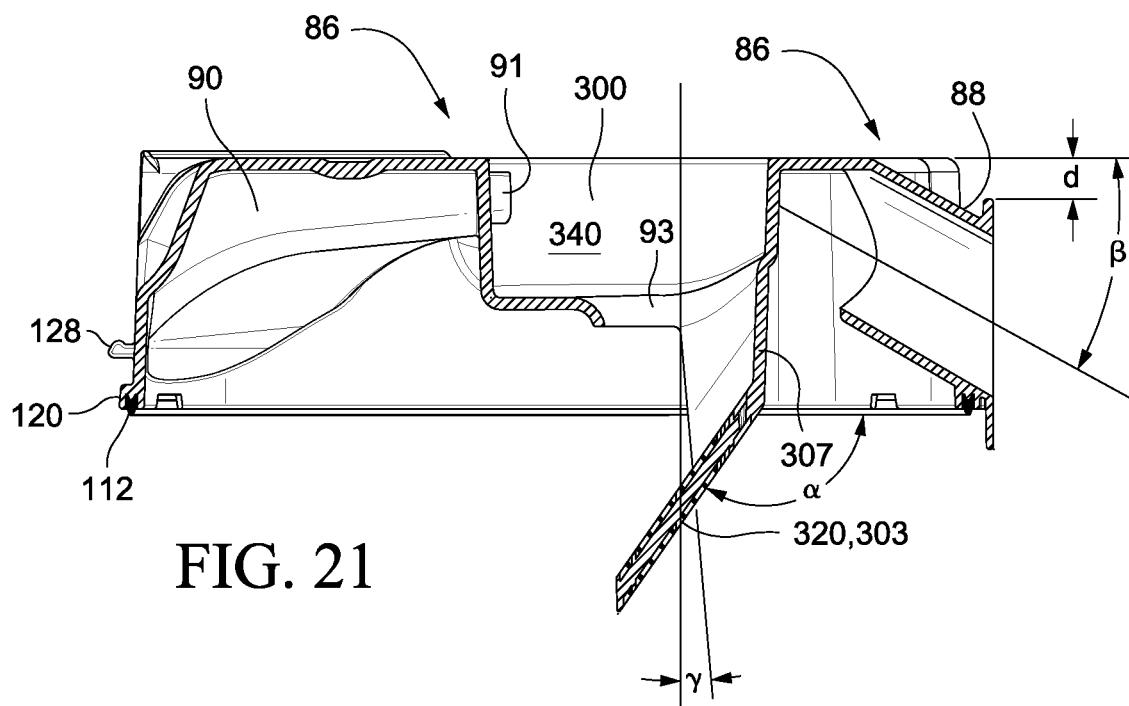


FIG. 21

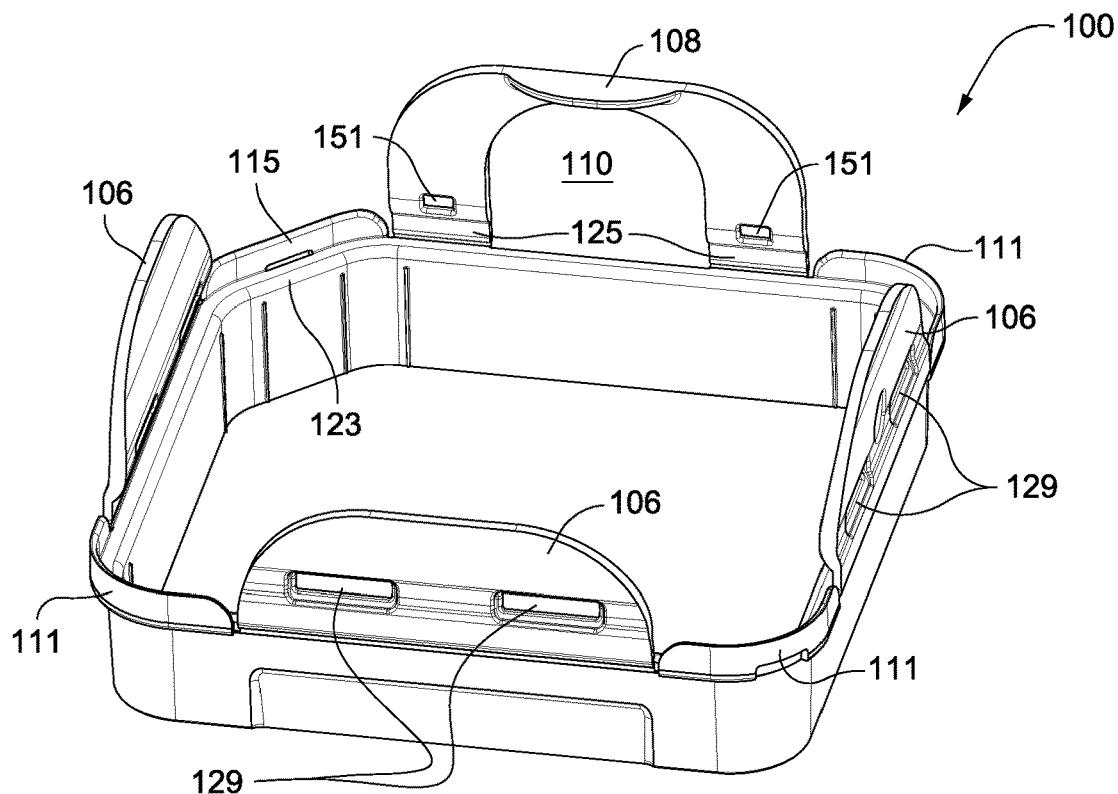


FIG. 22

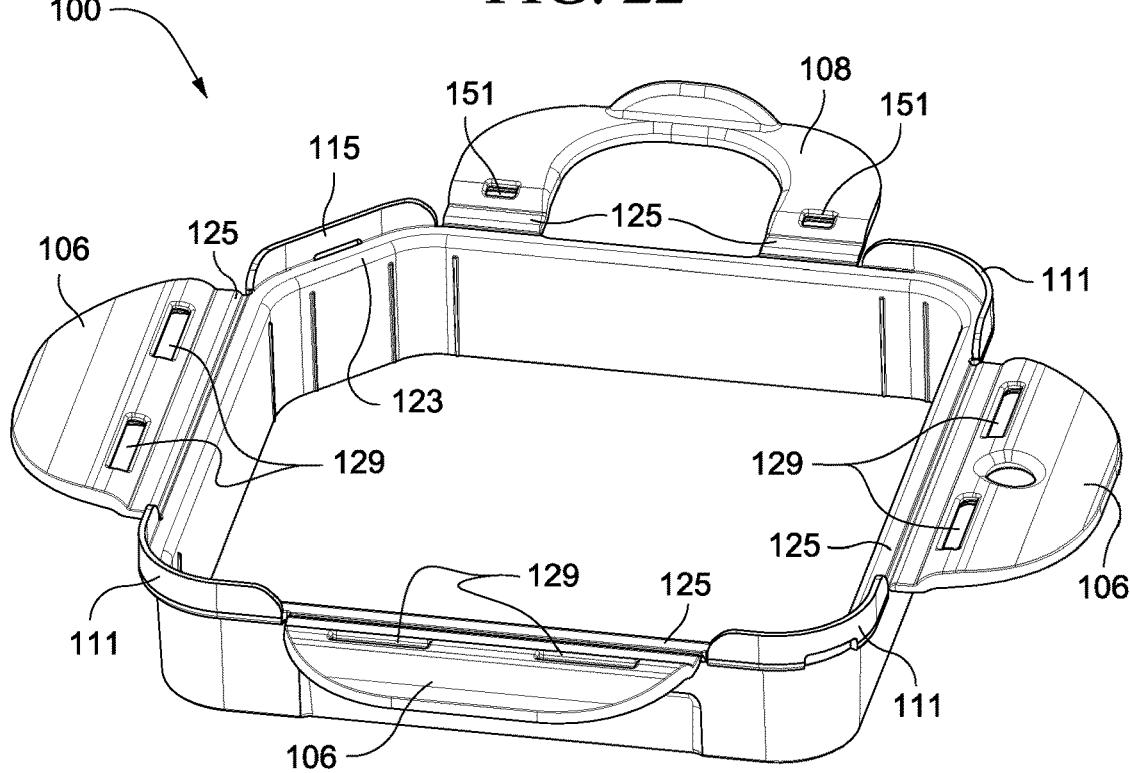


FIG. 23

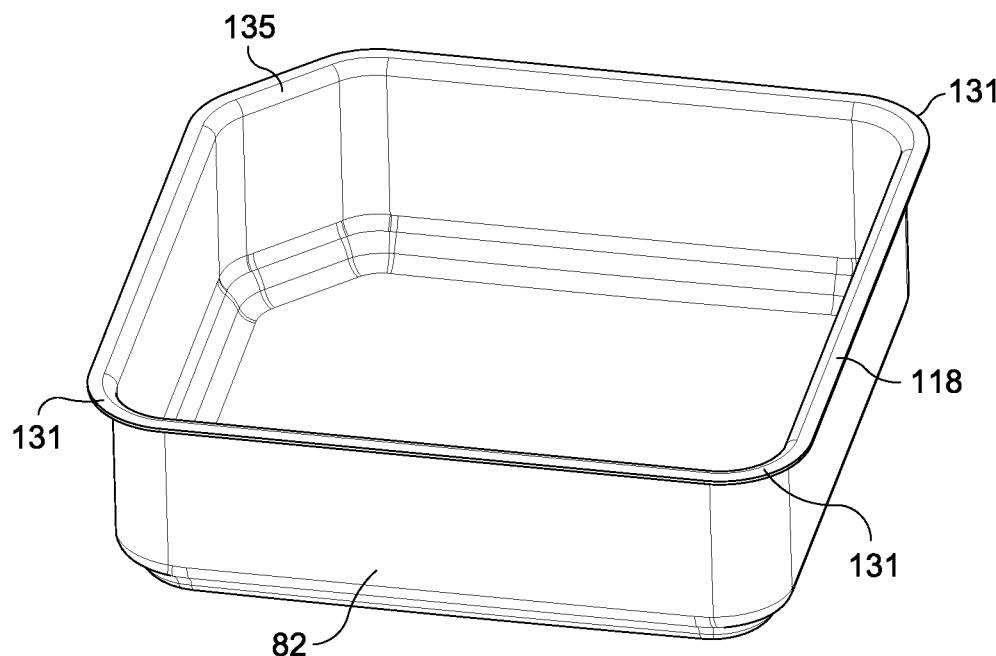


FIG. 24

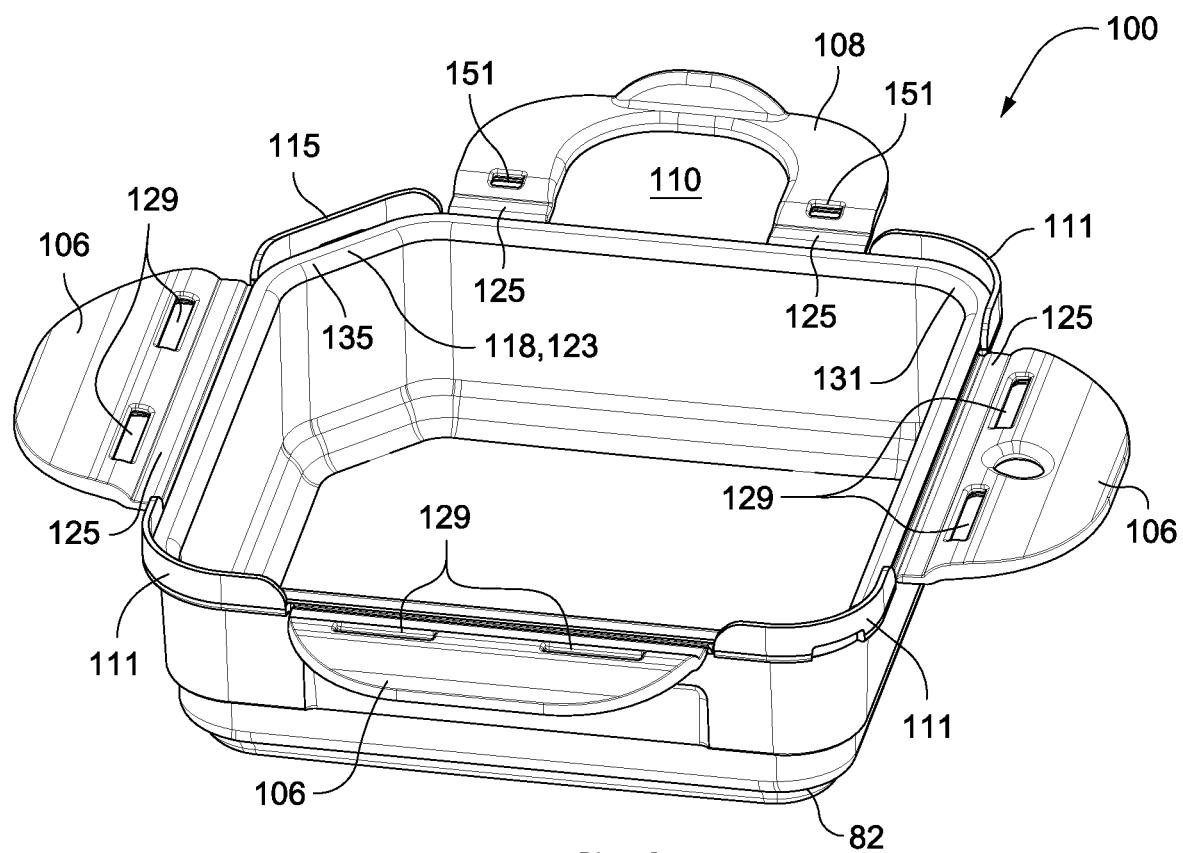
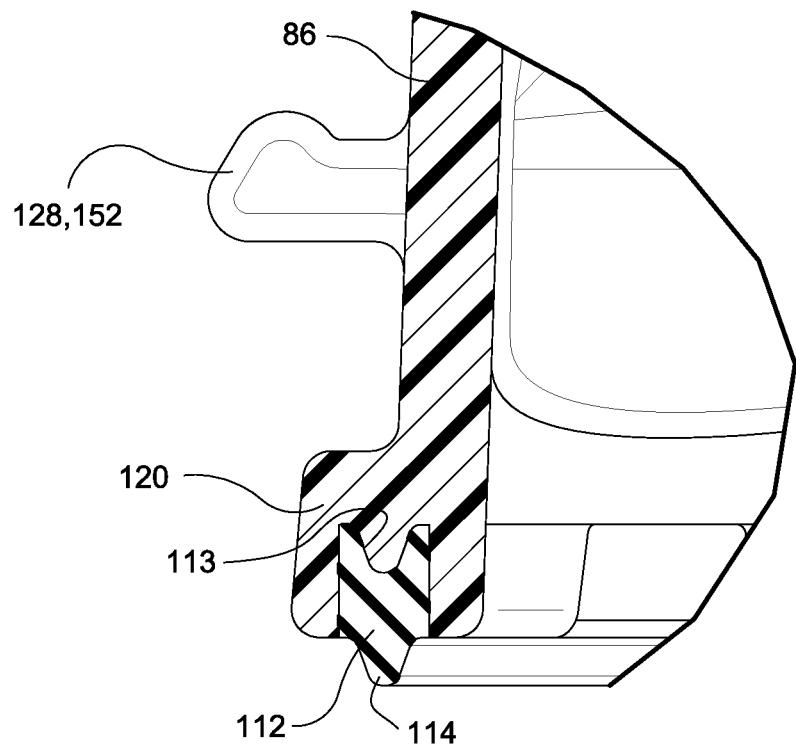
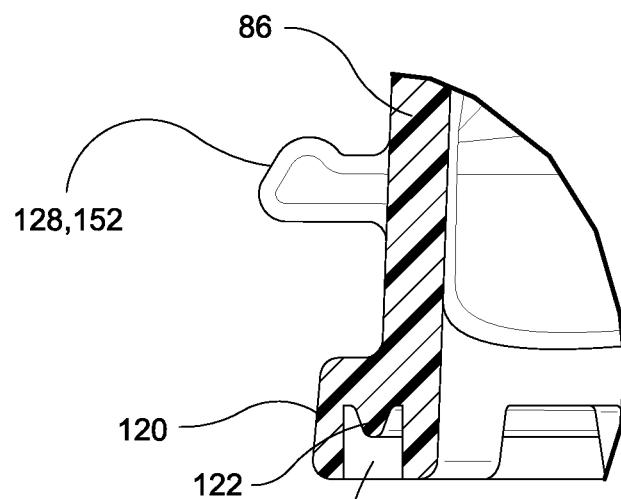


FIG. 25



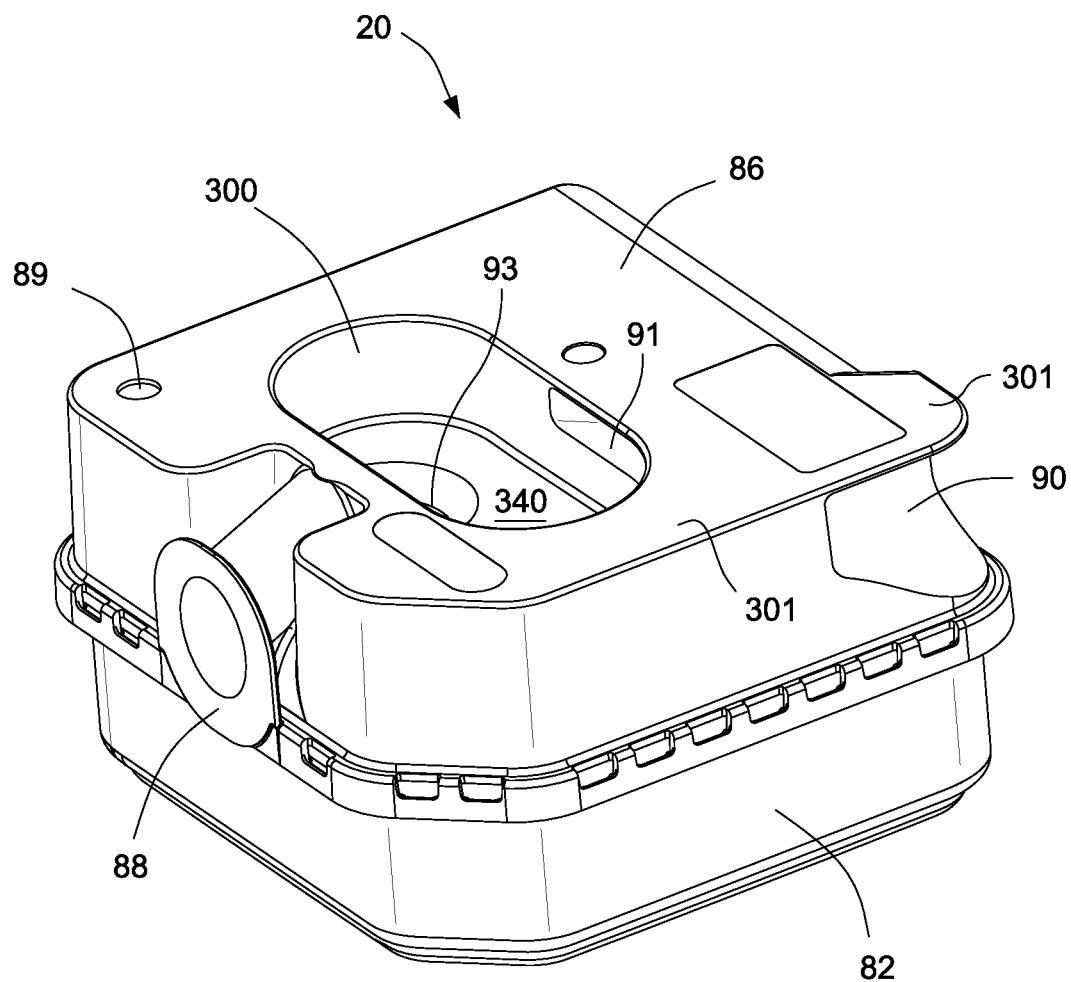


FIG. 28

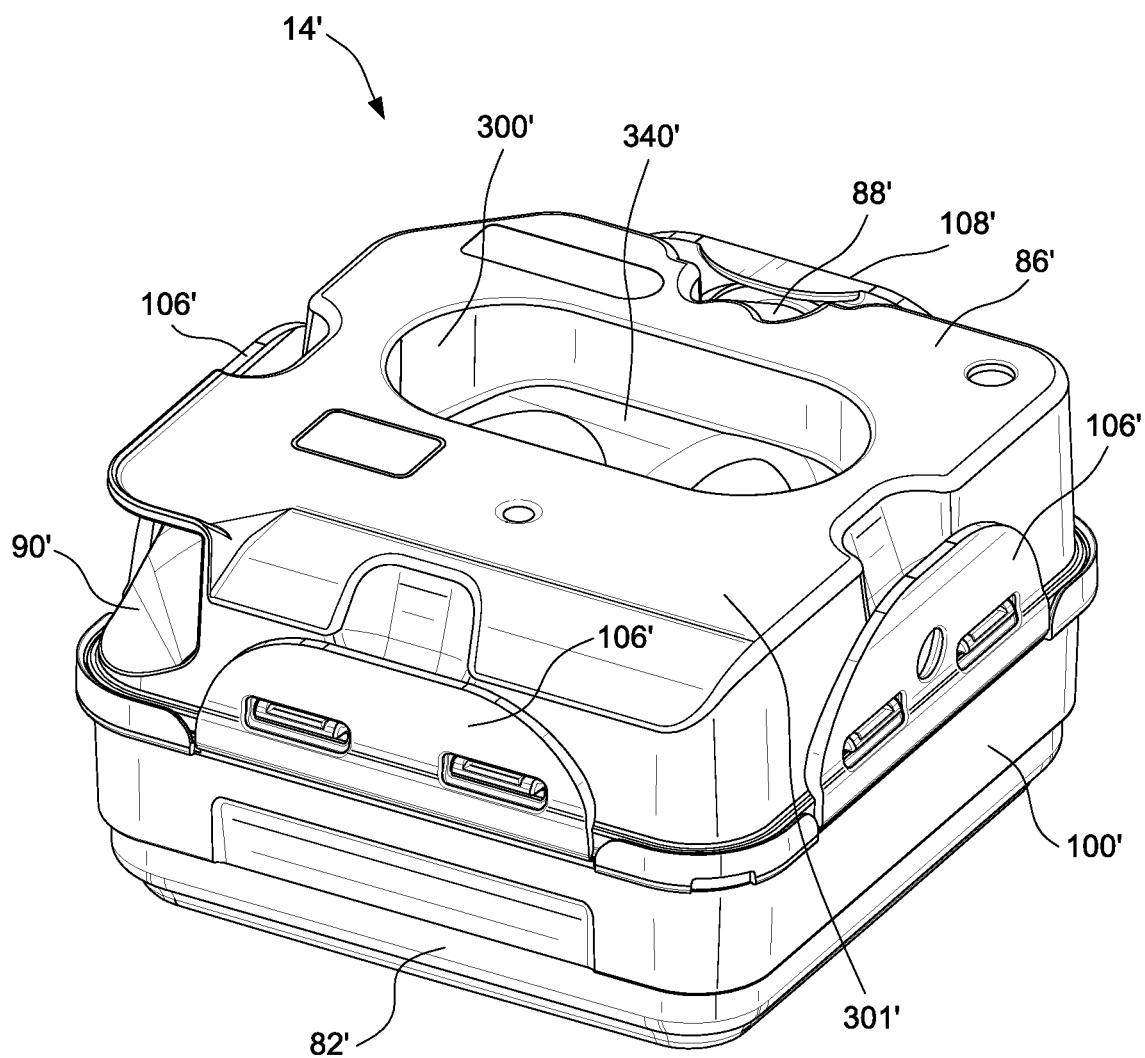


FIG. 29

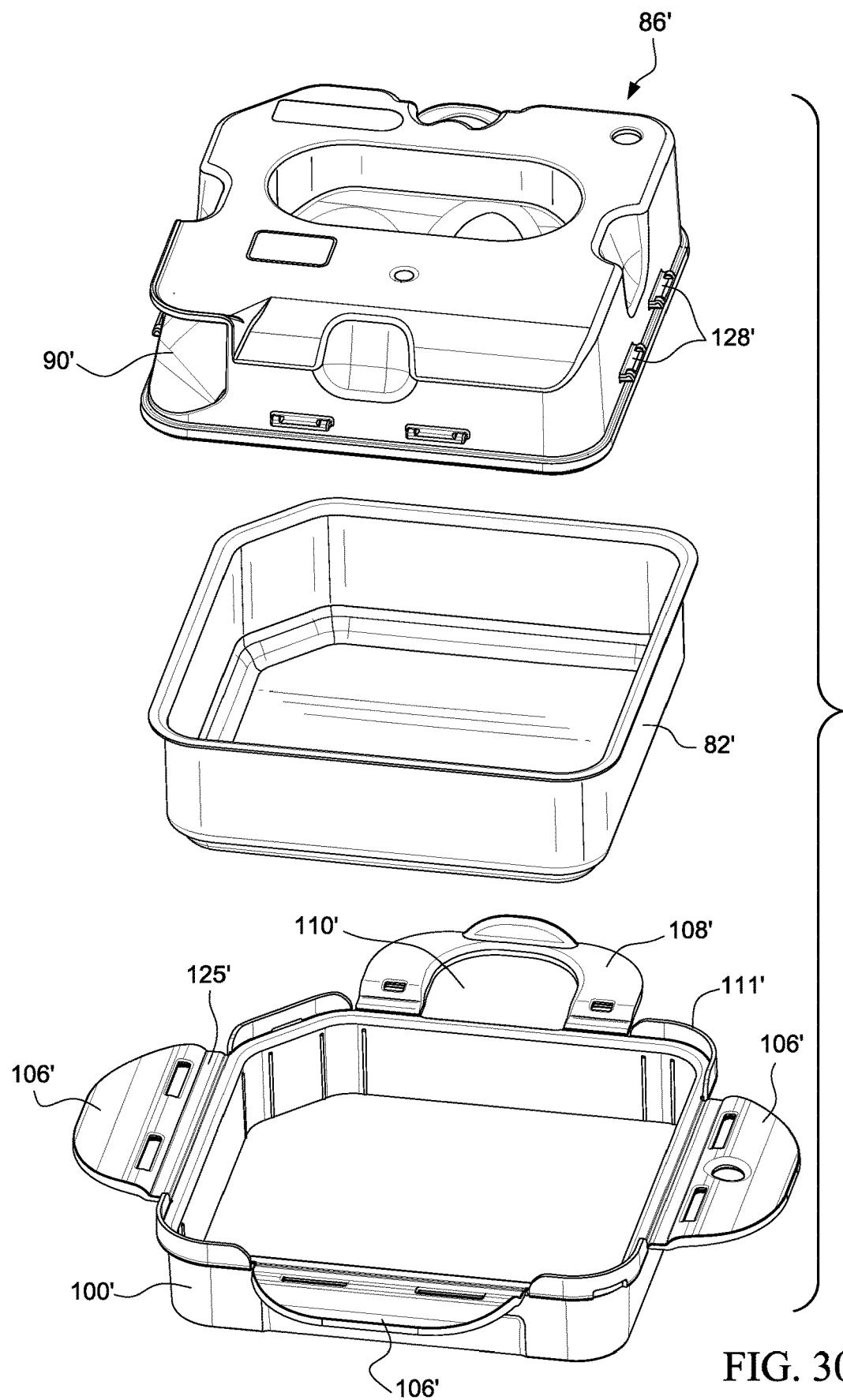


FIG. 30

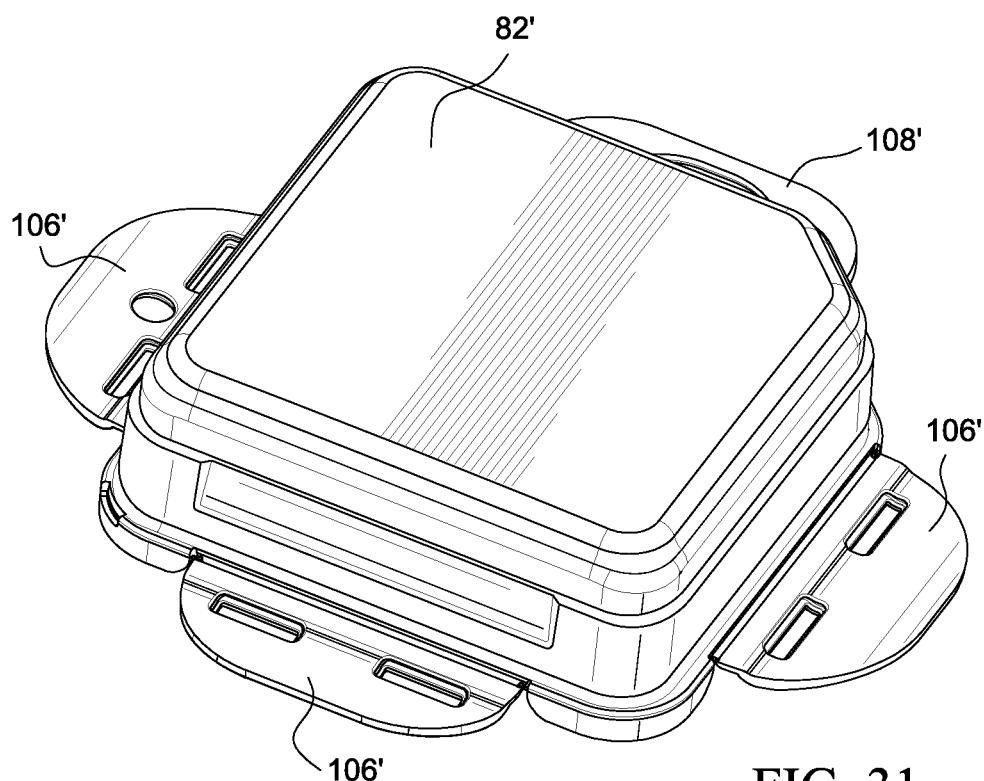


FIG. 31

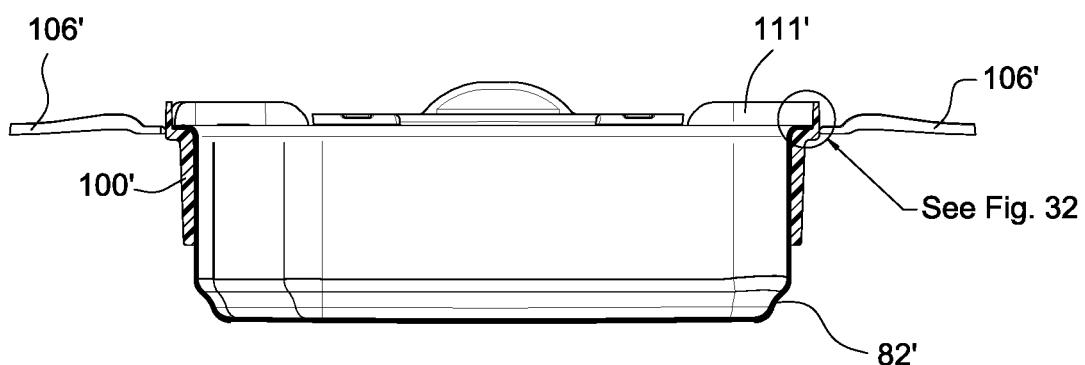


FIG. 32

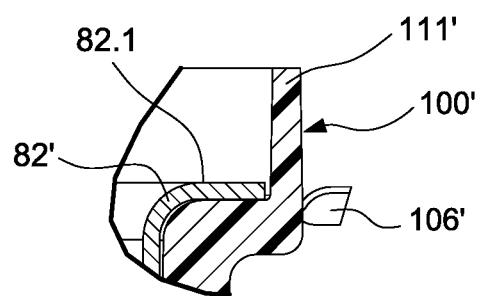


FIG. 33

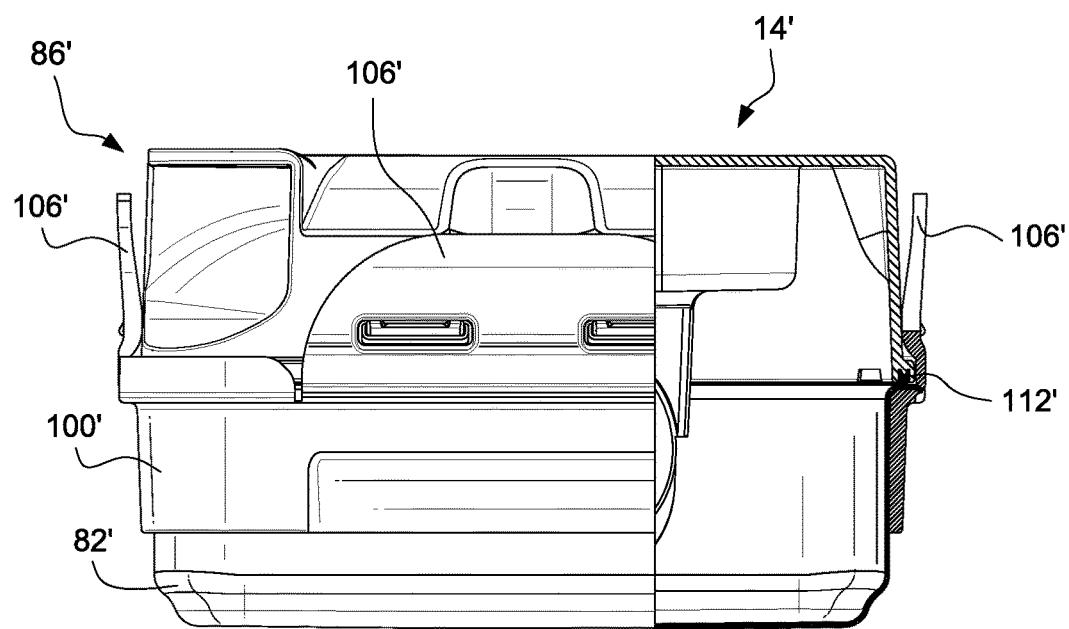


FIG. 34

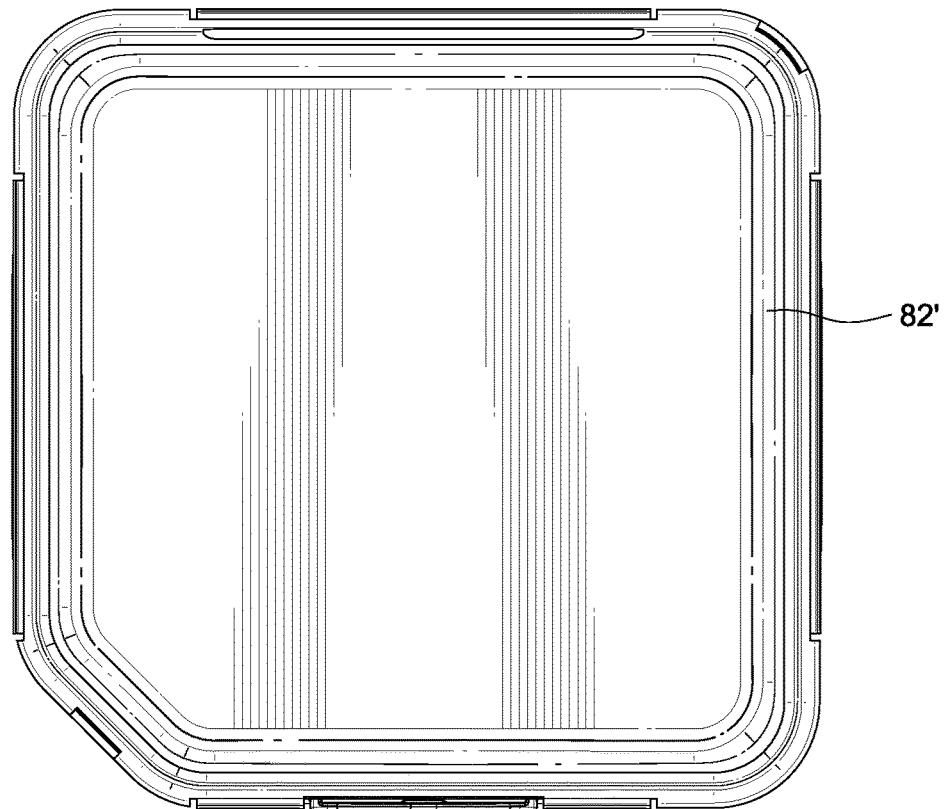


FIG. 35

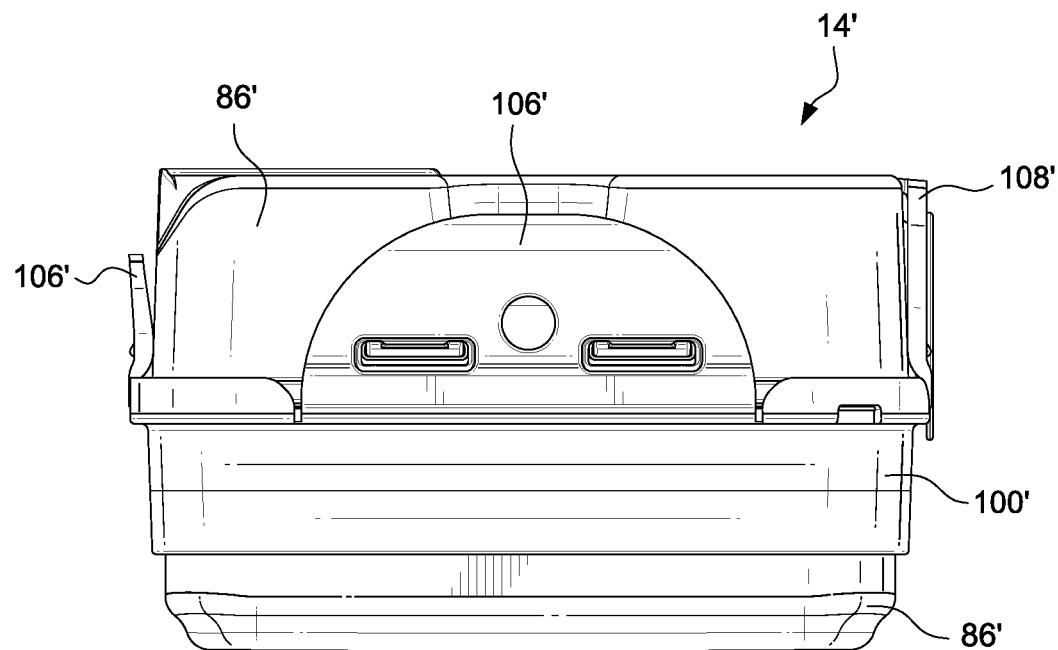


FIG. 36

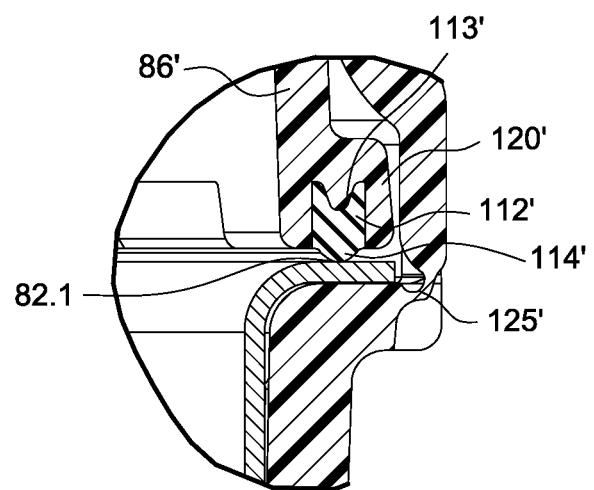


FIG. 37

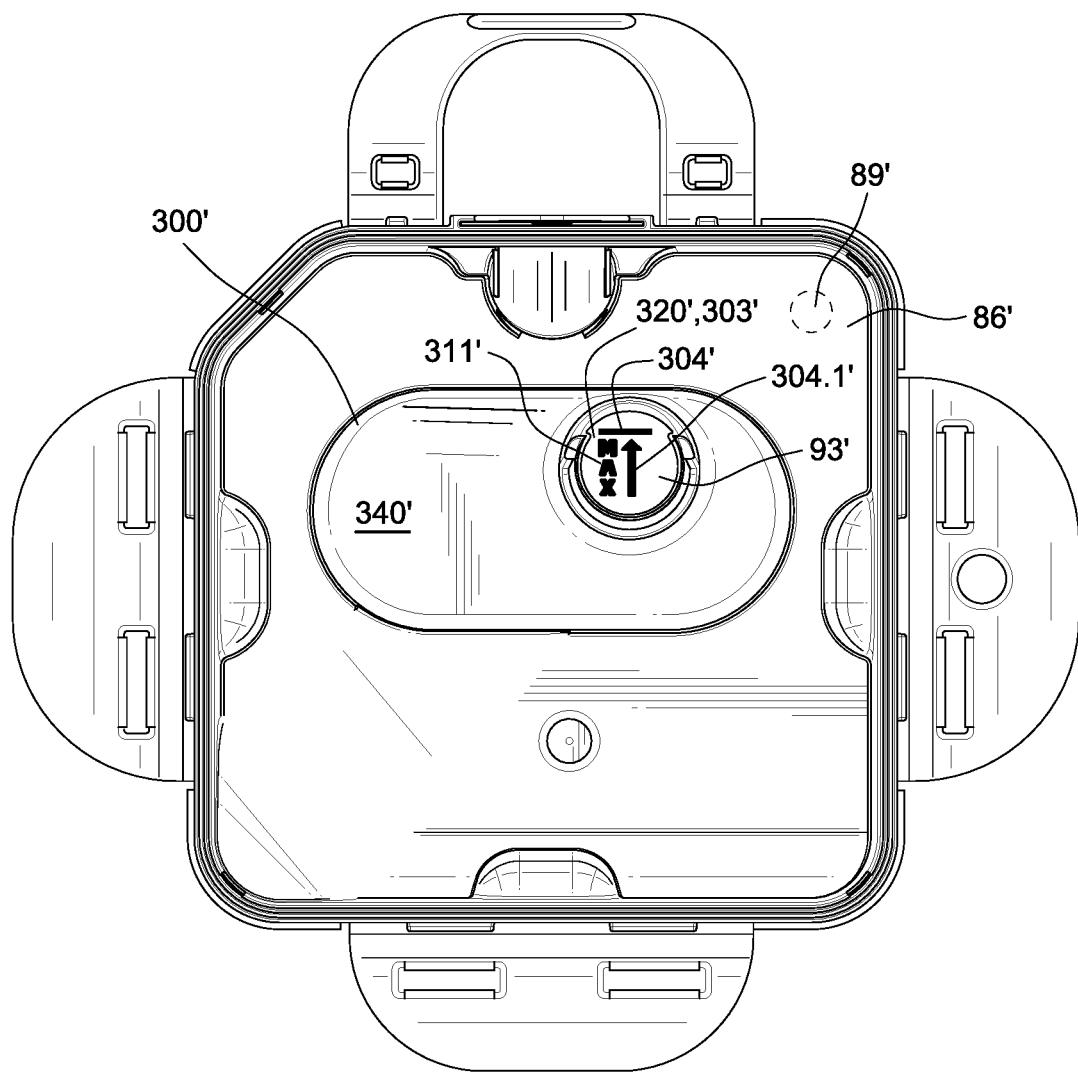


FIG. 38

HUMIDIFICATION OF RESPIRATORY GASES

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 15/665,747, filed, Aug. 1, 2017, which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 13/584,133, filed Aug. 13, 2012, now U.S. Pat. No. 9,737,682, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/522,763 filed Aug. 12, 2011, the entire contents of each is incorporated herein by reference.

[0002] In addition, the entire contents of International Application PCT/AU2009/001232, filed Sep. 17, 2009 (and published as WO 2010/031126 A1), and U.S. application Ser. No. 12/847,021, filed Jul. 30, 2010, are incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE TECHNOLOGY

[0003] The present technology relates to systems and method to control the humidity of breathable gases used in all forms of respiratory apparatus ventilation systems including invasive and non-invasive ventilation, Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP), Bi-Level therapy and treatment for sleep disordered breathing (SDB) conditions such as Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA), and for various other respiratory disorders and diseases.

BACKGROUND OF THE TECHNOLOGY

[0004] Respiratory apparatuses commonly have the ability to alter the humidity of the breathable gas in order to reduce drying of the patient's airway and consequent patient discomfort and associated complications. The use of a humidifier placed between the flow generator and the patient mask produces humidified gas that minimizes drying of the nasal mucosa and increases patient airway comfort. In addition in cooler climates, warm air applied generally to the face area in and about the mask is more comfortable than cold air.

[0005] Many humidifier types are available, although the most convenient form is one that is either integrated with or configured to be coupled to the relevant respiratory apparatus. While passive humidifiers can provide some relief, generally a heated humidifier is required to provide sufficient humidity and temperature to the air so that the patient will be comfortable. Humidifiers typically comprise a water tub having a capacity of several hundred milliliters, a heating element for heating the water in the tub, a control to enable the level of humidification to be varied, a gas inlet to receive gas from the flow generator, and a gas outlet adapted to be connected to a patient conduit that delivers the humidified gas to the patient's mask.

[0006] Typically, the heating element is incorporated in a heater plate which sits under, and is in thermal contact with, the water tub.

SUMMARY OF THE TECHNOLOGY

[0007] One aspect of the technology is a humidifier for a respiratory apparatus that includes a chamber that is pressurisable to reduce the pressure on joints of the humidifier tub (which is placed within the pressurised chamber) to reduce leaks.

[0008] A further aspect of the technology is a humidifier for a respiratory apparatus that includes a chamber that is

pressurisable to reduce tolerances for insertion of a tub with respect to seals on an inlet and an outlet tube of the humidifier chamber.

[0009] A still further aspect of the technology is a humidifier for a respiratory apparatus that directs air over the surface of a supply of water contained in a tub to humidify a flow of breathable gas regardless of the water level.

[0010] Another aspect of the technology is a humidifier for a respiratory apparatus that includes seals that are not under the supply of water, thus reducing a risk of water leakage.

[0011] Yet another aspect of the technology is a humidifier for a respiratory apparatus that includes a tub that is disposable.

[0012] Another aspect of the technology is a humidifier for a respiratory apparatus that includes a tub that is cleanable and/or reusable by disinfection and/or sterilisation methods.

[0013] Still another aspect of the technology is a humidifier for a respiratory apparatus that includes a tub that comprises a water level indicator, for example a water level indicator that indicates a maximum fill level, working, indicia and/or a marking, etc, e.g., arranged in a way (e.g., on an incline) that allows visual discrimination of water level.

[0014] A still further aspect of the technology relates to a water level indicator in a tub that may be viewed through a window of the humidifier. An even further aspect of the technology relates to a water level indicator that appears to change colour as the water level changes, for example appears to be a darker colour or mixture of colours, in order to enhance visual discrimination of the water level.

[0015] A further aspect of the technology relates to a tub that is removable from the humidifier and is configured to prevent any water flowing out of the tub from flowing back into the flow generator.

[0016] A still further aspect of the technology is a humidifier for a respiratory apparatus that prevents water from spilling back into a flow generator, or blower, that generates a flow of breathable gas.

[0017] According to an example, a tub configured to contain a supply of water and to be inserted into a chamber of a humidifier comprises a tub base configured to contain a supply of water; a tub lid connected to the tub base, the tub lid including an inlet configured to receive a flow of breathable gas to be humidified and an outlet for the humidified flow of breathable gas; and a water level indicator configured to indicate a level of the supply of water in the tub base, the water level indicator comprising an inclined portion configured to direct the flow of breathable gas from the inlet away from the outlet, and to improve the efficiency of moisture pick-up in to the air. This is achieved by the geometry of the inclined portion to promote swirl of the air above the water level.

[0018] According to another example, a tub configured to contain a supply of water and to be inserted into a chamber of a humidifier comprises a tub base configured to contain a supply of water; a tub lid connected to the tub base, the tub lid including an inlet configured to receive a flow of breathable gas to be humidified and an outlet for the humidified flow of breathable gas; and a water level indicator configured to indicate a level of the supply of water in the tub base. The water level indicator comprises an inclined portion, and the water level indicator is visible through the tub air inlet.

[0019] According to still another example, a humidifier for humidifying a flow of breathable gas to be delivered to a

patient comprises a chamber configured to receive the flow of breathable gas; a lid provided on the chamber and being movable between an open position and a closed position; a seal provided on the lid, the seal being configured to seal the chamber such that the flow of breathable gas pressurizes the chamber; and a tub as disclosed herein.

[0020] According to a further example, a respiratory apparatus for providing a humidified flow of breathable gas to a patient comprises a flow generator to generate a flow of breathable gas and a humidifier and/or a tub as disclosed herein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0021] Embodiments of the technology will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0022] FIG. 1 schematically depicts a PAP system according to a sample embodiment;

[0023] FIG. 2 schematically depicts a PAP system according to another sample embodiment;

[0024] FIG. 3 schematically depicts a PAP system according to another sample embodiment;

[0025] FIG. 4 schematically depicts of a PAP system including a flow generator and humidifier according to a sample embodiment;

[0026] FIG. 5 schematically depicts the humidifier of FIG. 4;

[0027] FIG. 6 schematically depicts the humidifier cradle;

[0028] FIG. 7 schematically depicts a front perspective view of a reusable and cleanable tub according to a sample embodiment;

[0029] FIG. 8 schematically depicts a front side view of the reusable and cleanable tub of FIG. 7;

[0030] FIG. 9 schematically depicts a rear side view of the reusable and cleanable tub of FIG. 7;

[0031] FIG. 10 schematically depicts a top view of the reusable and cleanable tub of FIG. 7;

[0032] FIG. 11 schematically depicts a front perspective view of a tub top, or lid, of the reusable and cleanable tub of FIG. 7;

[0033] FIG. 12 schematically depicts a front side view of the tub lid of FIG. 11;

[0034] FIG. 13 schematically depicts a rear side view of the tub lid of FIG. 11;

[0035] FIG. 14 schematically depicts a top view of the tub lid of FIG. 11;

[0036] FIG. 15 schematically depicts a bottom view of the tub lid of FIG. 11;

[0037] FIG. 16 schematically depicts a left side view of the tub lid of FIG. 11;

[0038] FIG. 17 schematically depicts a right side view of the tub lid of FIG. 11;

[0039] FIG. 18 schematically depicts a rear perspective view of the tub lid of FIG. 11;

[0040] FIG. 19 schematically depicts a bottom rear perspective view of the tub lid of FIG. 11;

[0041] FIG. 20 schematically depicts a cross section of the tub lid of FIG. 11 along line 20-20 in FIG. 14;

[0042] FIG. 21 schematically depicts a cross section of the tub lid of FIG. 11 along line 21-21 in FIG. 14;

[0043] FIG. 22 schematically depicts a latching plate according to a sample embodiment in a "closed" position or configuration;

[0044] FIG. 23 schematically depicts the latch plate of FIG. 22 in an "open" configuration;

[0045] FIG. 24 schematically depicts the tub base;

[0046] FIG. 25 schematically depicts the tub base and latching plate in a connected configuration;

[0047] FIG. 26 schematically depicts a rim of the tub lid;

[0048] FIG. 27 schematically depicts the rim of the tub lid of FIG. 23 including a seal;

[0049] FIG. 28 schematically depicts a rear perspective view of a disposable tub according to a sample embodiment; and

[0050] FIGS. 29-38 depict a reusable and cleanable tub according to another example of the present technology.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATED EMBODIMENTS

[0051] PAP System

[0052] As schematically shown in FIG. 1, a Positive Airway Pressure (PAP) system, for example a Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) system, generally includes a PAP device 10, an air delivery conduit 20 (also referred to as a tube or tubing), and a patient interface 50. In use, the PAP device 10 generates a supply of pressurized air that is delivered to the patient via an air delivery conduit 20 that includes one end coupled to the outlet of the PAP device 10 and an opposite end coupled to the inlet of the patient interface 50. The patient interface comfortably engages the patient's face and provides a seal. The patient interface or mask may have any suitable configuration as is known in the art, e.g., full-face mask, nasal mask, oro-nasal mask, mouth mask, nasal prongs, etc. Also, headgear may be utilized to comfortably support the patient interface in a desired position on the patient's face.

[0053] In embodiments, a humidifier may be incorporated or integrated into the PAP device or otherwise provided downstream of the PAP device. In such embodiments, the air delivery conduit 20 may be provided between the patient interface 50 and the outlet of the humidifier 15 as schematically shown in FIG. 2.

[0054] It should be appreciated that the air delivery conduit may be provided along the air delivery path in other suitable manners. For example, as schematically shown in FIG. 3, the humidifier 15 may be a separate component from the PAP device 10 so that an air delivery conduit 20(1) is placed between the PAP device 10 and the humidifier 15 and another air delivery conduit 20(2) is placed between the humidifier 15 and the patient interface 50.

[0055] Generally, a heated humidifier is used to provide sufficient humidity and temperature to the air so that the patient will be comfortable. In such embodiment, the air delivery conduit may be heated to heat the gas and prevent "rain-out" or condensation forming on the inside of the conduit as the gas is supplied to the patient. In this arrangement, the air delivery conduit may include one or more wires or sensors associated with heating.

[0056] Referring to FIGS. 4-6, a PAP system 10 according to a sample embodiment comprises a flow generator, or blower, 12 and a humidifier 15. The flow generator 12 is configured to generate a flow of breathable gas having a pressure of, for example, about 2-30 cm H₂O. The flow generator comprises a power button 2 to turn the PAP system on and off. A display 4 is provided to display interactive menus and information regarding the operation of the PAP system to the user or operator. The user or operator may

select menus and/or information through inputs **6**, which may be, for example, buttons or keys. A push button dial **8** may also allow the user or operator to select information and/or menus. The inputs **6** and the push button dial **8** may be used together to select information and/or menus.

[0057] The humidifier **15** comprises a humidifier chamber **16** and a lid **18** which is pivotable between an open and a closed position. A humidifier water chamber, or tub, **14** is provided in the humidifier chamber **16** and is covered by the lid **18** when the lid **18** is in the closed position. A seal **19** is provided to the lid **18**. The lid **18** includes a window **30** to allow visual inspection of the contents of the humidifier tub **14**. The seal **19** includes an aperture **31** that corresponds to the position of the window **30** of the lid **18**. In the closed position of the lid **18**, the seal **19** contacts the tub **14** to ensure good thermal contact between a bottom of the tub **14** and a heating plate (not shown) provided in the bottom of the humidifier chamber **16** as disclosed, for example, in WO 2010/031126 A1

[0058] As shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, the humidifier **15** is connectable to the flow generator **12** by connectors, or latches, **24** that engage corresponding recesses (not shown) in the flow generator **12**. An electrical connector **26** is provided to electrically connect the flow generator **12** to the humidifier **15**.

[0059] As shown in FIG. 4, the tub **14** comprises a tub lid **86** that is configured to direct a flow of breathable gas generated by the flow generator **12** into a channel **90** (best shown in FIG. 7) in the tub lid **86** from a channel inlet through to a channel outlet **91** (FIG. 18) of the channel **90** into the tub **14**. The humidifier chamber **16** includes an air inlet **22** configured to receive the flow of breathable gas generated by the flow generator **12** when the humidifier **15** is connected to the flow generator **12**. The inlet **22** directs the flow into the channel **90** in the tub lid **86** of the tub **14**. The flow is directed by the channel **90** to the inlet **93** into the tub **14**. The tub **14** includes an outlet **88** for the humidified flow of breathable gas. A tube connector (not shown) may be provided at a rear portion of the humidifier **15** in communication with the outlet **88** and configured for connection to a hose, tube, or conduit that is configured to deliver the humidified flow to patient interface, e.g., a mask. It should be appreciated that the outlet **88** may be provided separately from the tub lid **86**, for example it may be part of the tub base or provided as a separate element.

[0060] The humidifier **15** may include a control system, or controller, for example, a microprocessor provided on a printed circuit board (PCB). The PCB may be located in the wall of the humidifier chamber **16** and may include a light, e.g., a Light Emitting Diode (LED), to illuminate the contents of the tub **14** to permit visual inspection of the water level. Referring to FIG. 6, an aperture **35** may be provided in the wall of the humidifier chamber **16** to allow the light on the PCB to illuminate the humidifier chamber **16**. The aperture **35** may be covered with a cover (not shown) to prevent access to the PCB and the light (e.g. LED) from the humidifier chamber **16**. The cover may be transparent or colored to provide a colored light, such as a green light to appear within the humidifier chamber **16**. The light is provided to shine into the humidifier chamber **16** to allow the water level in the water tub **14** to be seen.

[0061] It should also be appreciated that the flow generator **12** comprises a control system, or controller, that communicates with the controller of the humidifier **15** when the

flow generator **12** and the humidifier **15** are electrically connected. The PAP system **10** may be operated according to various control algorithms stored in the controller(s) of the flow generator **12** and/or the humidifier **15**. Such control algorithms are disclosed in, for example, U.S. Patent Application Publication 2009/0223514 A1, the entire contents of which are incorporated by reference.

[0062] The humidifier **15** comprises the humidifier chamber **16** and the lid **18** which is pivotally connected to the humidifier chamber **16**. As shown in FIGS. 4 and 6, the lid **18** comprises a hinge portion **17** that is hinged to hinge portions **47** provided on the humidifier chamber **16**. An opening member **28** is provided for releasing the lid **18** to allow the lid to be pivoted to the open position shown in FIGS. 4 and 6 as described in WO 2010/031126 A1. Referring to FIGS. 4 and 5, the lid **18** comprises catches (not shown) that are configured to be engaged by latches **44** to maintain the lid **18** in the closed position. The seal **19** is configured to engage the water tub **14**, for example the tub lid **86**, when the lid **18** is in the closed position to push the tub **14** toward an outlet **34** of the humidifier chamber **16** to assist in forming a seal between the water tub outlet **88** and the humidifier chamber outlet **34**. The seal **19** is also configured to push the water tub **14** against a heating plate (not shown) when the lid **18** is in the closed position. The seal **19** is also configured to seal, when the lid **18** is in the closed position, the tub emptying aperture **89** provided in the tub lid **86**.

[0063] As shown in FIG. 6, the humidifier chamber **16** comprises a humidifier cradle **32** that includes the air inlet **22**. The humidifier cradle **32** also includes the humidifier chamber outlet **34** to allow the humidified flow to be delivered to a delivery hose, tube, or conduit that is configured to be connected to the humidifier to deliver the humidified flow to a patient. The outlet **34** is provided in a back side of the humidifier cradle **32**. It should be appreciated that the outlet **34** may be provided on a side of the humidifier cradle **32**. Such a modification would also entail modifying the tub **14** to align the outlet **88** of the tub **14** with the outlet **34** of the humidifier cradle **32**.

[0064] As also shown in FIG. 6, the humidifier cradle **32** is supported by a chamber bottom **54** of the humidifier chamber **16**, as disclosed in WO 2010/031126 A1

[0065] Humidifier Tub—Cleanable

[0066] Referring to FIGS. 7-27, the humidifier tub **14** comprises a tub base **82** configured to contain a supply of water and a tub lid **86** that includes a channel **90** that receives the flow of breathable gas generated by the flow generator **12** that enters the humidifier **15** through the air inlet **22**. The outlet **91** of the channel **90** is configured to direct the flow into the inlet **93** of the tub lid **86** when the tub lid **86** is secured to the tub base **82** as described in more detail below. The tub lid **86** includes an opening **300** and a sump region **340** that surrounds the inlet **93** of the tub lid **86** to direct the flow of air from the flow generator to the water contained in the tub **14**. The sump region **340** also facilitates filling the tub **14** by providing a larger area for entry of water than the inlet **93** of the tub lid **86**. A tub emptying aperture **89** may also be provided in the tub lid **86**.

[0067] FIGS. 29-38 show another example of the present technology, wherein like elements have been identified by like parts, but with a “prime”, e.g., **100'**, added.

[0068] Referring to FIGS. 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 18-21, the opening **300** of the sump region **340** may be as shown, e.g.

generally rectangular with D-shaped ends, or may be any other shape, for example oval, elliptical, or round. The opening 300 and the sump region 340 may be large enough to reduce the amount of water that misses the inlet 93 during filling and to buffer the water when poured in a rate that exceeds the filling capacity of the inlet 93. The inlet 93 may be provided in the bottom of the sump region 340, as shown in FIGS. 4, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 18 and 19, at a position that prevents water from exiting the tub 14 through the inlet 93 when the tub 14 is tilted, for example 90°, toward the flow generator 12. As shown in FIG. 21, the outlet 91 of the channel 90 is above the inlet 93 to reduce the possibility of water entering the channel 90 during filling or due to splashing.

[0069] The tub lid 86 also comprises a cover portion 301 that covers the section of the flow channel 90 from the flow generator 12 to the outlet 91 of the channel 90 that is angled down towards the flow generator 12. The cover portion 301 prevents any water from flowing back into the flow generator 12 if the tub 14 was filled with water while still connected to the flow generator 12 as water may only be poured into the tub in the region provided by the opening 300 which is designed to channel the water down towards the inlet 93 of the tub lid 86.

[0070] As shown in FIGS. 7-9, the tub lid 86 may be secured to the tub base 82 by a plurality of clips 106, 108 provided on a latching plate 100, although it should be appreciated that the clips 106, 108 may be provided on the tub base 82. The clip 108 may have an aperture 110 configured to accommodate the outlet 88 of the tub 14. The tub lid 86 may include projections 128 that are received in apertures 129 in the clips 106. The tub lid 86 may also include projections 152 that are received in apertures 151 provided in the clip 108.

[0071] As also shown in FIGS. 7-9, the tub lid 86 may include recesses 330 to accommodate the fingers of a user of the tub or a clinician to provide a space between the tub lid 86 and the clips 106 as the user inserts the tub lid 86 on to the tub base 82 so that the projections 128 are received in the apertures 129. The recesses 330 may also accommodate the fingers during removal of the lid 86 from the base 82, for example to allow the parts of the tub 14 to be disassembled and cleaned.

[0072] Referring to FIGS. 22-25, the latching plate 100 comprises the clips 106, 108 that may be integrally formed with the latching plate 100 by, for example, living hinges 125. The latching plate 100 may be formed of, for example, polypropylene (PP) which will allow the living hinges 125 to be open and closed a large number of times without breaking. Polypropylene is also inexpensive and has good chemical resistance and is a sturdy and tough material that is not brittle.

[0073] FIG. 22 shows the latching plate 100 with the clips 106, 108 in a “closed” position or configuration that retains the tub lid 86 to the tub base 82 and FIG. 23 depicts the latching plate 100 in an “open” configuration with the clips 106, 108 folded downwardly to permit insertion of the tub base 82 into the latching plate 100 as described in more detail below.

[0074] As shown in FIGS. 22 and 23, the latching plate 100 includes corner flanges 111, 115 that extend from a rim 123 of the latching plate 100. As shown in FIG. 24, the tub base 82 comprises corresponding corners 131, 135 that facilitate alignment and assembly of the tub base 82 with the

latching plate 100, as shown in FIG. 25. The latching plate 100 is slid into place from the bottom of the tub base 82 so that the rim 123 of the latching plate 100 engages with, i.e. overlies, the rim 118 of the tub base 82. The latching plate 100 is engaged with the tub base 82 by a friction fit (and this fit can be enhanced, e.g., by heating the plate to an elevated temperature and assembling these parts at that time) so that the latching plate 100 is retained when the clips 106, 108 are in the open configuration shown in FIG. 25. The tub lid 86 is connected to the tub base 82 and secured in position by folding the clips 106, 108 from the open position shown in FIG. 25 to the closed position shown in FIG. 7. The humidifier tub 14 may then be inserted into the humidifier 15 as shown in FIG. 4.

[0075] Water Level Indicator

[0076] Referring to FIGS. 10-21, a water level indicator 320 may be provided to the tub lid 86 of the humidifier tub 14 that is visible through the window 30 of the lid 18 of the humidifier 15. The light emitted from the PCB through the aperture 35 may improve the visibility of the water level on the water level indicator 320. The water level indicator 320 may comprise a base portion 307 that extends from the tub lid 86 around the inlet 93 and an angled or inclined portion 303 extending from the base portion 307. The inclined portion 303 may include markings 304 to indicate various water levels. The inclined portion 303 may also include indicia 311 (e.g. “MAX”) to indicate a maximum water fill level.

[0077] In the case of FIG. 38, the indicator 320' may include a marking 304' (e.g., indicating the maximum fill level), and the indicia (e.g., wording such as “MAX”) may be written in a vertical orientation such that the indicator becomes progressively covered with water as the tub base is filled, e.g., the “X” in “MAX” is first covered then the “A”, then the “M” before reaching the fill line. Further, the lettering in the indicia may be dimensioned so that the individual letters increase (or decrease) in size in a direction towards the bottom of the tub. One or more of these measures should help the user better anticipate when the water level is approaching the maximum fill level, to prevent water from inadvertently overflowing. To this end, a vertically oriented line including an arrow 304.1' at its top end also indicates the direction of filling. The marking, indicia and/or wording may be placed and formed so that it is depressed into, projects from and/or is in-plane with its support surface.

[0078] As shown in FIGS. 19-21, the water level indicator 320 may be integrally formed with the tub lid 86, e.g., the base portion 307 may be formed in one piece with the tub lid 86 via a molding process. Optionally the base portion 303 may extend half way around the inlet. This provides ease of manufacturing and assembly and reduces costs by reducing the number of components of the humidifier tub 14. For example, the flow plate disclosed in WO 2010/031126 A1 may be eliminated from the tub. It should be appreciated, however, that the water level indicator 320 may be formed separately from the tub lid 86 and be attachable to, and detachable from, the tub lid 86.

[0079] As the water level indicator 320 is located adjacent the water and airflow inlet 93, a user can immediately see from the top, while pouring water into the sump region 340, when the water level has reached a desired level, and/or the maximum level. This improves usability compared to, for example, a water level indicator that is located at a position

distant from the water inlet 93 that must be looked at and checked separately from the filling process, or as a water line on the side of the tub as a user would have to tilt his or her head to determine the water level or look lower down at the side to see if water has filled to the desired or maximum level. In addition, when the tub 14 is placed inside the humidifier 15 and the lid 18 is closed to form a pressurised chamber, the window 30 allows a user or clinician to look from the top through the window 30 to see the tub 14 inside the humidifier 15. The location of the inlet 93 and the water level indicator 320 is beneath the window 30 so the user or clinician can easily and immediately check the water level without having to open the lid 18 and/or take out the tub 4. A user or clinician who suspects that the water has run out can visually check without stopping or disturbing the operation of the system. Reducing the need to remove the tub 14 from the humidifier 15 also allows the user or clinician to check water level without risking spillage of the water from the tub 14 and/or into the flow generator 12.

[0080] The inclined portion 303 of the water level indicator 320 baffle is located generally in front of the outlet 88 of the tub 14. This helps to deflect water away from the outlet 88 while filling the tub 14 by pouring water into the sump region 340. Also, as the water inlet 93 is also the air inlet, when the airflow enters the interior of the tub 14, it is deflected generally away from the outlet 88, thus directing the airflow across the water surface before exiting the outlet 88. As the pressurized air inflow is initially directed away from the outlet 88 there is less chance of splashing or spitting of water out of the outlet 88. The shape, angle of incline, and location of the inclined portion 303 of the water level indicator 320 may be designed to provide a desired airflow profile to improve water vapour pickup by the airflow and to reduce the likelihood of water spitting or splashing out of the outlet 88. The outlet conduit 88 may be angled upwards and the inclined portion 303 of the water level indicator 320 may be inclined to direct the pressurised airflow to not hit the water surface directly. A wall 335 may also be provided in the tub lid 86 to direct the airflow.

[0081] The water level indicator 320, for example, the inclined portion 303, may be formed of a colored plastic material, for example yellow. The water level indicator 320 may be, for example, translucent. When the tub 20 is filled with water, the water level indicator 320 may appear to change color, for example appearing slightly darker or a greenish-yellowish color as the water level rises.

[0082] As shown in FIG. 21, the inclined portion 303 may be at an angle α to a bottom plane of the tub lid 86. The value of the angle α may depend on a combination of factors, including the size of the inlet 93, the length of the inclined portion 303, the depth of the tub base 82, and/or the distance the inclined portion 303 extends into the tub base 82 and/or water. The angle α may be from just over 90° to just under 180°. The angle α should be sufficient to permit the inclined portion 303, including the indicia, to be visible from generally above the tub, while not causing the inclined portion 320 to extend further than the radial length of the inlet 93. That is, the inclined portion 303 should not extend under the portion of the sump region 340 surrounding the inlet 93 as such an overlapping of material (i.e. the inclined portion 303 and the sump region 340) increases the moulding and tooling complexities associated with forming the tub lid 86 as a single piece. The angle may be, for example, about 115°-135°, for example about 125°. The angle α should

improve the visibility of the indicia, for example by increasing the contrast of the colour of the indicia with the water level when viewed from above. The angle α should also allow the inclined portion 303 to extend deep enough into the tub base 82 to allow indication of the water level until it is quite low. The combination of the angle α and the length of the inclined portion 303 may be chosen to provide these results.

[0083] The angle α may also be designed so that the change in the air flow direction causes only a small increase in total pressure loss through the tub and so that a swirling action is created in the air flow due to the inclined portion 303 in combination with other internal tub features, e.g., wall 335. The swirling versus pressure loss determination may be made using, for example, computational fluid dynamics (CFD) simulation.

[0084] As also shown in FIG. 21, the base portion 307 of the water level indicator 320 may be provided at an angle γ to a vertical axis of the tub. The angle γ may be, for example about 1°-10°, for example about 5°. The angle γ may improve water flow from the inlet 93 and swirl of the air flow over the surface of the water.

[0085] The outlet 88 has an axis at a downward angle β to the plane of the top of the humidifier lid 86. The angle β may be, for example, about 25°-35°, for example about 29.5°. The top of the outlet 88 is also displaced a distance d from the top of the humidifier lid 86 that may be, for example, about 1 mm-10 mm, for example about 5.6 mm. The downward angle and displacement of the outlet 88 helps to prevent spill back of water from the tub.

[0086] As shown in the figures, the water level indicator 320 may be a rounded D-shape, although it should be appreciated that other shapes such as rectangular, square, triangular, oval or any other shape may be used.

[0087] The tub base 82 may be formed of, for example, metal. For the cleanable and reusable tub 14, the tub base 82 may be formed of stainless steel. For a cleanable and disposable tub, the tub base may be formed of a lower cost conductive material such as aluminium or conductive polymers. It should be appreciated that the tub base 82 may be formed of other metals or alloys, or of other materials.

[0088] The tub lid 86 may be formed of, for example, a plastic material, such as polycarbonate. For example, the tub lid 86 may be formed of Makrolon 2458, manufactured by Bayer. For a cleanable and reusable tub, the tub lid may be formed of a dishwasher and/or disinfection safe material, such as polycarbonate. For a disposable tub, the tub lid may be formed from a lower cost material, such as ABS (acrylonitrile butadiene styrene). The tub lid 86 may be transparent, e.g. water clear, or may be translucent, including any colour of translucent material.

[0089] Humidifier Tub—Disposable

[0090] Referring to FIG. 28, a humidifier tub according to another sample embodiment and that is configured to be disposable is illustrated. The humidifier tub 14 may comprise a tub base 82 and a tub lid 86 having a channel 90. The tub lid 86 may be the same as the tub lid of the cleanable humidifier tub discussed with respect to FIGS. 7-25. The tub lid 86 may be secured to the tub base 82 by, for example, welding, adhesive, and/or one or more clips.

[0091] The disposable tub base 82 may be formed of, for example, a metal, such as aluminium. It should also be appreciated that the disposable tub base 82 may be formed of other metals or alloys, or from a plastic material.

[0092] Humidifier Tub—Seal

[0093] Referring to FIGS. 26 and 27, a seal 112 may be provided on the rim 120 of the tub lid 86. The rim 120 includes a recess, or receptacle, 121 extending around the periphery of the tub lid 86 to receive the seal 112. The recess 121 includes a projection 122 that is configured to be received in a recess 113 of the seal 112. The seal 112 includes a sealing projection, or sealing edge, 114 that is configured to be deformed when the tub lid 86 and the tub base 82 are connected together, for example when the clips 106, 108 of the tub base 82 are connected to the projections 128, 152 of the tub lid 86, or when the tub lid 86 is adhered or welded to the tub base 82. As seen in FIGS. 33 and 37, the base 82 includes a surface 82.1 that engages the projection or edge 114. The deformation of the sealing projection, or edge, 114 creates a watertight seal between the tub base 82 and the tub lid 86. The projection 122 of the receptacle 121 of the rim 120 of the tub lid 86 directs a force to the sealing projection 114 when the tub base 82 and tub lid 86 are connected to facilitate deformation of the sealing projection 114. It should be appreciated that the tub lid 86 and the seal 112 may be formed of the same material, for example silicone or Thermoplastic elastomer (TPE), and the tub lid 86 and the seal 112 may be integrally formed in one piece. It should also be appreciated that the seal 112 may be formed of, for example, silicone or TPE, and molded on to the tub lid 86.

[0094] The humidifier 14 does not include any seals that are provided under the water supply of the tub base 82. The humidifier lid 18 comprises the seal 19 to allow for pressurizing of the humidifier chamber 16 with the flow provided by the flow generator 12 to reduce the pressure on the tub joints, including the disposable tub and the reusable, cleanable tub, thus reducing leaks. Pressurizing the humidifier chamber also reduces tolerances for insertion of the water tub with respect to seals on the inlet of the humidifier and the outlet tube of the humidifier 14.

[0095] The seal for the cleanable and reusable tub and the seal for the disposable tub may be formed of different materials and/or different colours. For example, the seal 112 of the cleanable and reusable tub may be formed of silicone. The seal 112 of the disposable tub may be formed of, for example, TPE material, such as Dynaflex G6713-0001-Yellow [PMS 107C], manufactured by GLS Thermoplastic Elastomers (yellow colour pigment by PolyOne Corporation). It should be appreciated that the seals for the reusable and cleanable tub and for the disposable tub may be the same material and/or the same colour. It should also be appreciated that the material of the seal 112 may be moulded onto at least a portion of the water level indicator 320, for example on the indicia 304 and/or 311 and/or on the inclined portion 303, to improve the visibility of the water level indicator.

[0096] While the invention has been described in connection with what are presently considered to be the most practical and preferred examples, it is to be understood that the invention is not to be limited to the disclosed examples, but on the contrary, is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the technology. Also, the various examples described above may be implemented in conjunction with other embodiments, e.g., an aspect of one example may be combined with an aspect of another example to realize yet other examples. Further, each independent feature or com-

ponent of any given assembly may constitute an additional example. Furthermore, each individual component of any given assembly, one or more portions of an individual component of any given assembly, and various combinations of components from one or more examples may include one or more ornamental design features. In addition, while the technology has particular application to patients who suffer from OSA, it is to be appreciated that patients who suffer from other illnesses (e.g., congestive heart failure, diabetes, morbid obesity, stroke, bariatric surgery, etc.) can derive benefit from the above teachings. Moreover, the above teachings have applicability with patients and non-patients alike in non-medical applications.

[0097] In this specification, the word “comprising” is to be understood in its “open” sense, that is, in the sense of “including”, and thus not limited to its “closed” sense, that is the sense of “consisting only of”. A corresponding meaning is to be attributed to the corresponding words “comprise,” “comprised” and “comprises” where they appear.

[0098] It will further be understood that any reference herein to known prior art does not, unless the contrary indication appears, constitute an admission that such prior art is commonly known by those skilled in the art to which the technology relates.

What is claimed is:

1. A tub configured to contain a supply of water and to be coupled to a humidifier, comprising:

a tub base configured to contain the supply of water; a tub lid connected to the tub base, the tub lid including an inlet configured to receive a flow of breathable gas to be humidified;

an outlet for the humidified flow of breathable gas; and a water level indicator configured to indicate a level of the supply of water in the tub base, the water level indicator comprising an inclined portion configured to direct the flow of breathable gas from the inlet away from the outlet.

2. A tub configured to contain a supply of water and to be coupled to a humidifier, comprising:

a tub base configured to contain the supply of water; a tub lid connected to the tub base, the tub lid including an inlet configured to receive a flow of breathable gas to be humidified;

an outlet for the humidified flow of breathable gas; and a water level indicator configured to indicate a level of the supply of water in the tub base, wherein the water level indicator is visible through the inlet.

3. A tub according to claim 2, wherein the water level indicator comprises an inclined portion.

4. A tub according to claim 1, wherein the water level indicator further comprises a base portion.

5. A tub according to claim 4, wherein the inclined portion extends from the base portion.

6. A tub according to claim 1, wherein the water level indicator is coupled to the inlet.

7. A tub according to claim 1, wherein the water level indicator comprises indicia and/or a marking configured to indicate at least a maximum water fill level in the tub base.

8. A tub according to claim 7, wherein the indicia and/or marking is provided on the inclined portion.

9. A tub according to claim 1, wherein the tub lid comprises a channel configured to receive the flow of

breathable gas and direct the flow of breathable gas to the inlet, the channel comprising a channel inlet and a channel outlet.

10. A tub according to claim **9**, wherein the tub lid comprises a cover portion that covers the channel from the channel inlet to the channel outlet.

11. A tub according to claim **9**, wherein the channel is angled upward from the channel inlet to the channel outlet.

12. A tub according to claim **9**, wherein the channel outlet is provided in a sump region of the tub lid.

13. A tub according to claim **12**, wherein the inlet is provided in the sump region below the channel outlet.

14. A tub according to claim **13**, wherein the inlet is provided at a bottom of the sump region and is configured to direct water poured into the sump region into the tub base.

15. A tub according to claim **13**, wherein the base portion of the water level indicator is connected to the sump region of the tub lid.

16. A tub according to claim **15**, wherein the base portion extends at least partially around the inlet.

17. A tub according to claim **16**, wherein the base portion extends half way around the inlet.

18. A tub according to claim **1**, wherein the water level indicator is integrally formed with the tub lid.

19. A tub according to claim **1**, wherein the tub lid comprises a wall extending from a region adjacent the inlet in a direction away from the outlet to direct the flow of breathable gas away from the outlet.

20. A tub according to claim **1**, wherein the inclined portion is angled with respect to a bottom plane of the tub lid at just over 90° to just under 180°.

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