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EUROPEAN QUALIFYING EXAMINATION 2026

PAPER B

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Drawings of the application

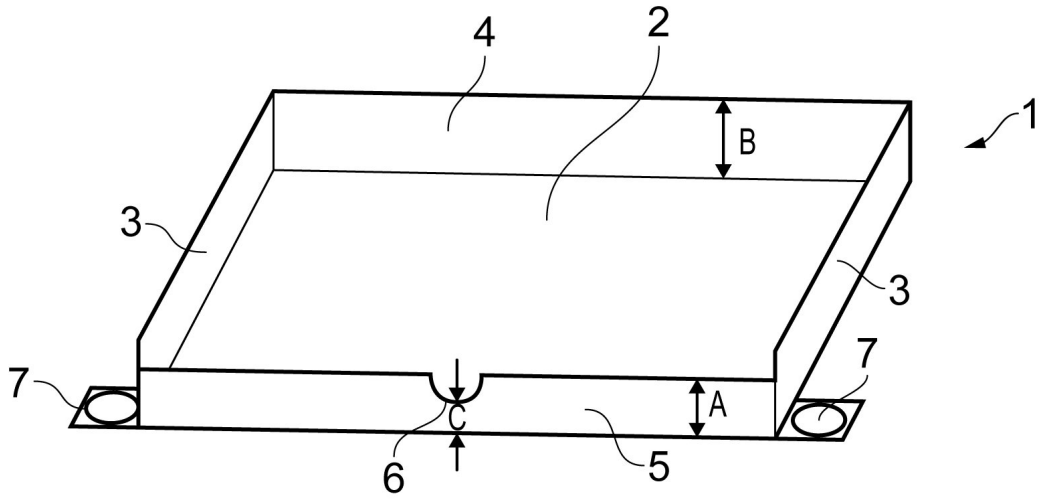

FIG . 1

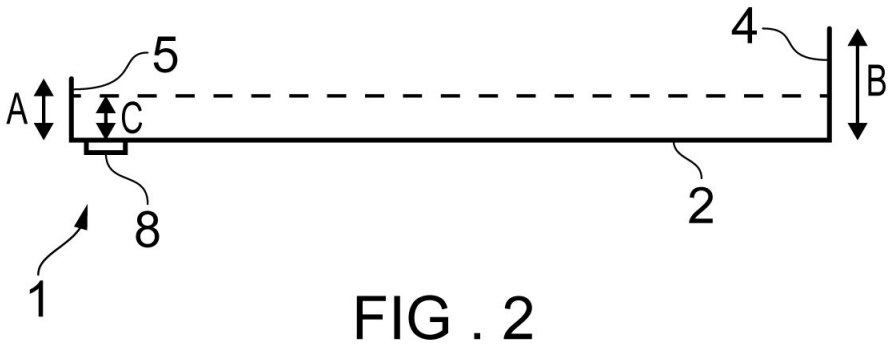

FIG . 2

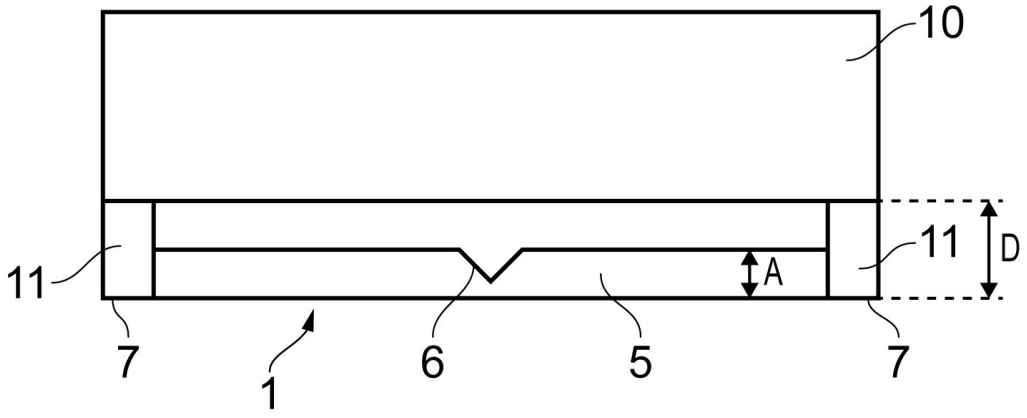

FIG. 3

D1: Drip tray

[001] Drip trays are used to prevent water damage to the floor underneath kitchen appliances. The appliance, typically a refrigerator, is equipped with wheels so that it can be rolled into place on the drip tray.

[002] A common problem is that the wheels may damage the front wall of the drip tray when rolled over the front wall due to the weight of the appliance. If the front wall is damaged, water dripping from the kitchen appliance during use (typically as a result of condensation) can escape from the drip tray where the damage has occurred and can cause water damage to the floor. In particular, water may collect underneath the drip tray due to capillary forces and remain undetected until the kitchen appliance reaches the end of its lifetime and is replaced.

[003] To resolve this problem, the invention comprises a reinforced front wall with a rounded top that is able to withstand the weight of the appliance without deforming or breaking. As well as being reinforced, the front wall is also lower than the corresponding sidewalls and rear wall to ensure that the wheels of the appliance can easily roll over the front wall.

[004] Another problem with drip trays is that they can be moved or misaligned by the wheels of the kitchen appliance. To resolve this, an adhesive strip can be provided to fix the drip tray to the floor before the kitchen appliance is rolled into place.

[005] The drip tray comprises a polymer material. We have found that the polyolefins polyethylene and polypropylene are particularly suitable for the reinforced front wall. In some embodiments, the front wall is reinforced by using a sturdier material than the other parts of the drip tray. In other embodiments it is of the same material but thicker.

[006] If the kitchen appliance is a dishwasher, the drip tray can be combined with a skirting board to achieve an aesthetically pleasing and uniform appearance with the kitchen cupboards. For this purpose, the skirting board should fit on the floor in front of the front wall so that the drip tray is hidden from view.

[007] Fig. 1 shows the drip tray 1 with a base 2 and walls 3, and with the front wall 4 lowered. Fig. 2 shows the drip tray 1 in a cross-sectional view from above with the front wall 4 reinforced by being thicker than the other walls 3. Fig. 3 shows the drip tray 1 in a cross-sectional view from the side during installation of a kitchen appliance 5. In particular, Fig. 3 shows that the front wall 4 remains undamaged despite a wheel 6 of the kitchen appliance 5 having rolled over it.

Drawings D1:

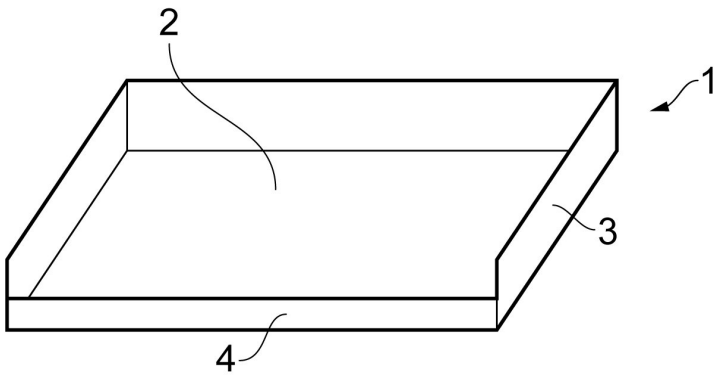

FIG. 1

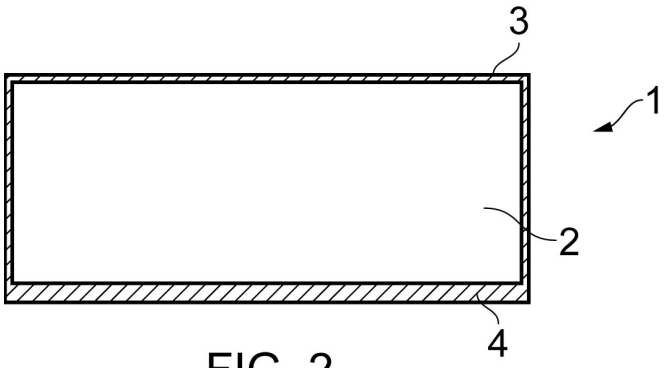

FIG. 2

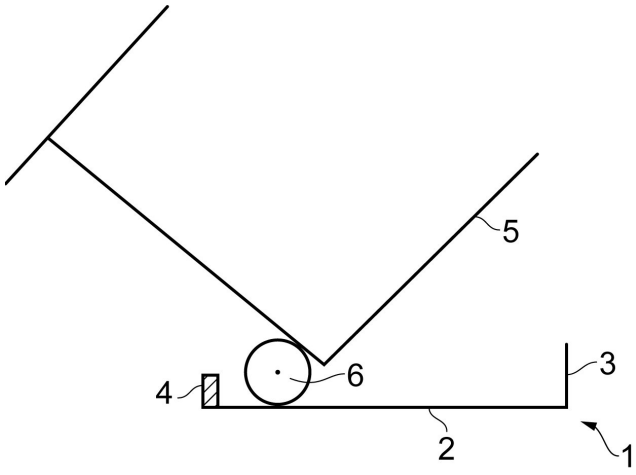

FIG. 3

D2: Water retainer

[001] Water damage due to leakages from kitchen appliances such as refrigerators is an increasing problem with a high cost to homeowners and insurance companies. To alleviate this problem, we present a water retainer that can be arranged underneath a refrigerator or freezer to capture any leakage.

[002] The water retainer has a rectangular base with a continuous wall extending around the edges of the base. The wall can be 5-10 cm high to ensure that a large volume of water can be held in the retainer without leaking onto the floor. It is advantageous to provide such high walls since this increases the volume that the water retainer is able to hold.

[003] After the homeowner has been alerted to the malfunction of the refrigerator or freezer and the water supply has been shut off to prevent further leaks, a hose can be inserted between the kitchen appliance and the water retainer to allow the emptying of the water retainer by pumping or any other suitable way. To allow for the insertion of the hose, the continuous wall is lower on the front side of the water retainer.

[004] To facilitate installation, sealable openings are provided in the sidewalls for insertion of handles to lift the water retainer into place. Before using the water retainer and to prevent water exiting the water retainer, it is important to cover these openings with plugs, flaps or other closures that provide a watertight seal.

[005] There can also be at least one adhesive strip provided to fix the water retainer to the floor. This ensures that the water retainer remains in place while the refrigerator is installed.

[006] If there is a skirting board installed in combination with the kitchen appliance, it will need to be removed before water is emptied from the water retainer. The skirting board could also be mounted directly on the water retainer, for instance through snap connections that connect the floor supports of the skirting board to receivers on the water retainer.

[007] Fig. 1 shows the water retainer 1 with a base 2 and continuous wall 3 having a lower front side 4 and sealable openings 5.

Drawing D2:

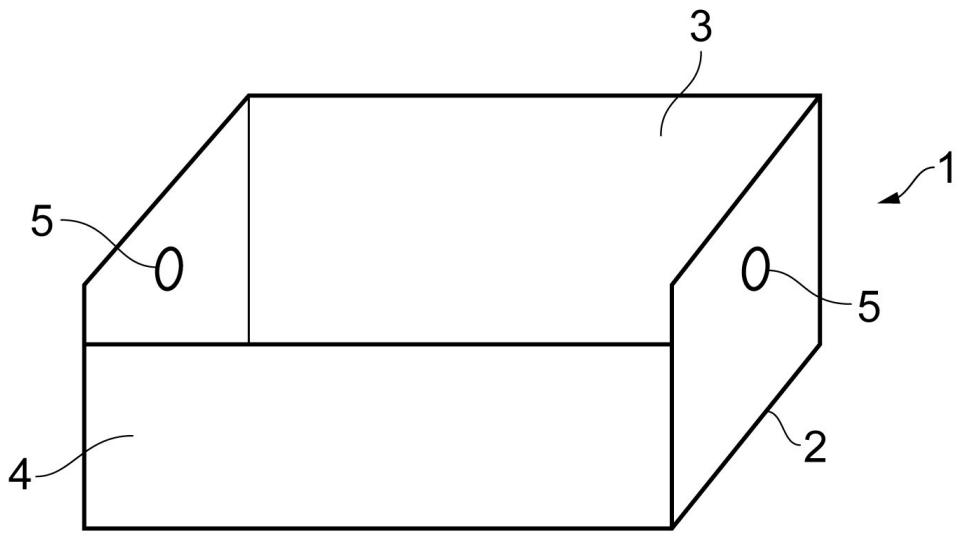

FIG. 1

D3: Dishwasher drip tray

[001] The present invention concerns a drip tray for detecting a leakage underneath a kitchen appliance. The drip tray comprises a rectangular base with a continuous sidewall that delimits the base, and is equipped with an alarm that is triggered when water fills the base.

[002] Fig. 1 discloses the drip tray 1 comprising the base 2 and the continuous sidewall 3. A front section 4 of the sidewall 3 houses the alarm 5 and a battery 6. There are also wires in the form of a first wire section 71 and a second wire section 72 that are arranged on the base and are connected to the alarm 5 and the battery 6. The wire sections 71 and 72 are arranged on the base 2 with a gap 9 between them forming an open circuit 8. This is shown in Fig. 2 showing the drip tray 1 from above, and in Fig. 3 showing a circuit diagram that comprises only the components of the circuit 8 and not the drip tray 1 as such.

[003] In order to use the drip tray 1, it is placed on the floor and optionally also attached to the floor by means of an adhesive strip (not shown). A kitchen appliance, such as a dishwasher, is then placed on top of the drip tray 1. Optionally, a skirting board is added to hide the drip tray and the legs of the appliance from view.

[004] As long as the drip tray 1 is dry, the alarm remains inactive. However, when a leakage occurs and water collects on the drip tray 1, the water fills the gap 9, enabling electrical current to flow from the first wire section 71 to the second wire section 72. This closes the circuit 8 and activates the alarm. In a low-tech embodiment, the alarm can be an acoustic signal that alerts the homeowner to the leakage. In a more advanced embodiment, the alarm can additionally be connected to a home alarm system or a mobile phone. Optionally, the drip tray 1 is also connected to a switch that shuts off the water supply to the kitchen when the alarm is activated. In the more advanced embodiment, it is also possible to monitor the status of the battery to ensure that it has not run out. However, even the low-tech embodiment is also very reliable since the battery 6 used in the drip tray 1 has a lifetime of at least three to five years.

[005] A particular advantage of the drip tray is that even a small leakage can be detected immediately to prevent the floorboards from getting wet. Also, in an improvement to prior art drip trays, the front section 4 of the sidewall is lower in order to reduce the risk of the legs of the appliance hitting the front section 4 as the appliance is lifted into place. The height of the front section 4 should be 30 mm or less. In earlier drip trays it was a common problem that damage to the front section would also damage the battery and the alarm or even break the wire. If the wire is broken, the drip tray 1 is not able to alert the homeowner to the leakage since the circuit 8 cannot be closed to activate the alarm.

[006] The drip tray 1 can also be combined with a skirting board if desired. If a skirting board is used, it is advantageous to cut out a section of the skirting board to make the front section 4 of the drip tray 1 visible. Alternatively, the skirting board can be arranged on floor supports that raise the skirting board from the floor and expose the entire front section 4. This makes it easier to assess the damage when the alarm is activated, as the homeowner can then inspect the drip tray 1 without having to remove the skirting board, for example by shining a flashlight into the space between the front section 4 and the skirting board. To achieve this, the floor supports should have a height that is greater than the height of the front section 4.

[007] Suitable materials for the drip tray 1 include any kind of polymer, and in particular the polyolefins polyethylene and polypropylene. These materials may comprise additives to prevent the growth of bacteria or fungi, such as mould, on the surface of the drip tray.

Drawings D3:

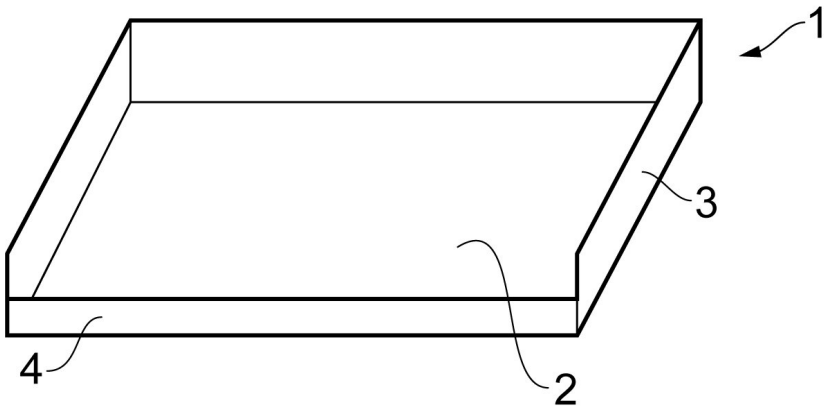

FIG. 1

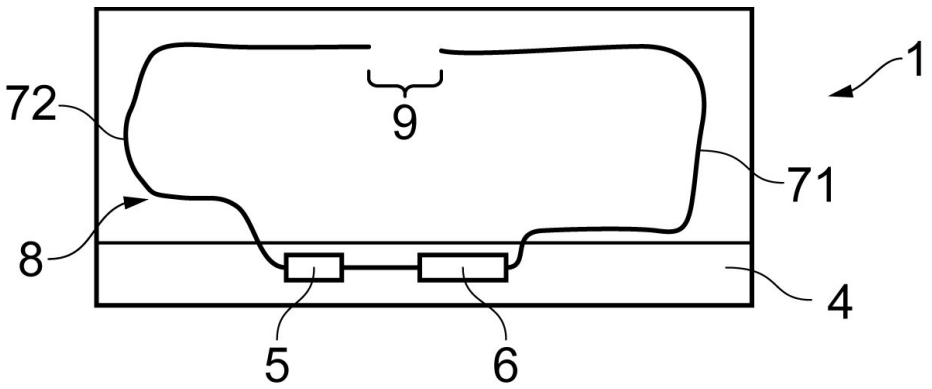

FIG. 2

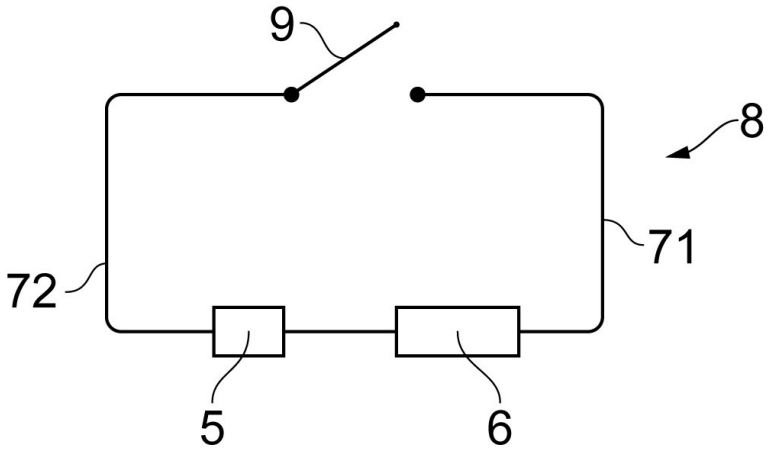

FIG. 3

Inhalt (3 Seiten „Mitteilung“, „Schreiben der Mandantin“ und „Geänderte Ansprüche“) nur auf dem Bildschirm während der Prüfung verfügbar

Content 3 pages „Communication“, „Client‘s letter“ and „Amended claims“) only available on screen during the examination

Contenu (3 pages „Notification“, „Lettre du client“ et „Revendications modifiées“) uniquement visible sur l‘écran pendant l‘examen