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**(54) Method for controlling the metered amount of detergent in an automatic washing machine or the like**

(57) In a clothes washing machine that comprises a washing tub (4) containing a drum (5), and is adapted to carry out a washing and rinse cycle followed by respective water discharge phases, the method calls for:

- during each water discharge phase, the time intervals ( $T_w, T_r$ ) to be measured, which elapse from the instant in which the water in the tub (4) lowers down to a first level ( $L_2$ ), to the instant in which the water further decreases down to a level ( $L_1$ ); and
- when the ratio ( $R$ ) between the so measured time intervals ( $T_w, T_r$ ) is detected to be higher than a given threshold value ( $R_x$ ), an alarm signal to be generated which is indicative of an excessively metered amount of detergent.

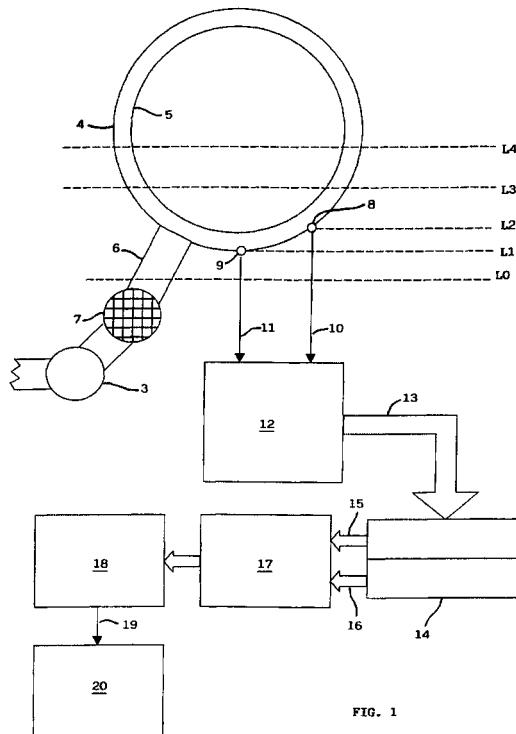


FIG. 1



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## EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 00 12 0376

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CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ..... & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
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