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(54) **Support for bathrobes, underwear and the like**

(57) A support (1) for bathrobes, underwear and the like comprises: a frame (2), to which a concave barrier (3) is rotatably connected, and a towel holder (4) in particular for a bathrobe. The towel holder (4) presents

means for heating the bathrobe, to enable a user to take the bathrobe already warm. The support (1) also comprises an upper cover element (21) supporting at least one lighting lamp.

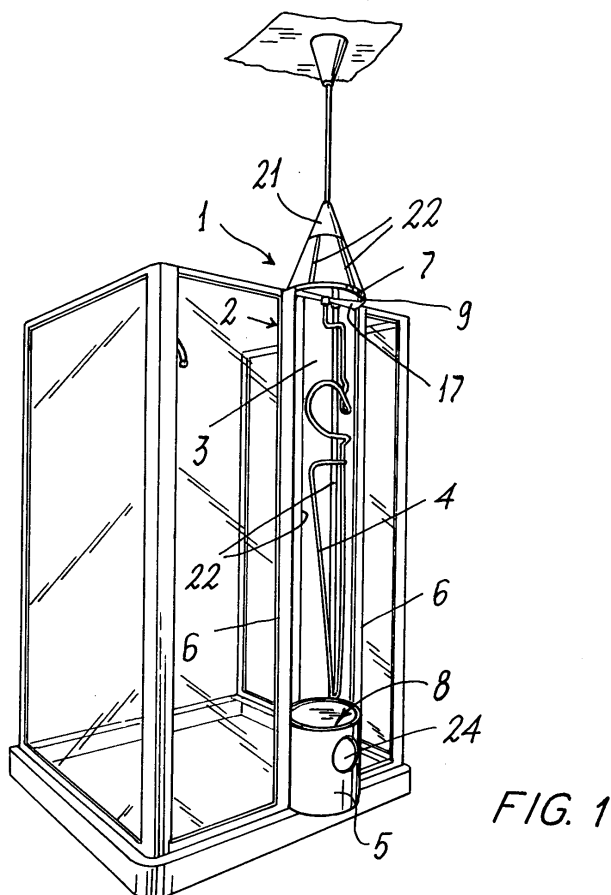


FIG. 1

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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a support for bathrobes, underwear and the like, in particular for a shower cabinet.

[0002] Shower cabinets for positioning on shower trays are widely available, they enabling the shower to be taken without wetting the bathroom.

[0003] In particular, traditional shower cabinets comprise a closed structure of glass or plastic material, provided with a door for access to its interior.

[0004] However, these shower cabinets present the drawback that, on termination of the shower, the user has to open the shower cabinet to take and put on the bathrobe; the impact with the external temperature, always lower than the temperature within the shower cabinet, is evidently unpleasant for the user.

[0005] To obviate this drawback, shower cabinets have been provided in one side with a usually concave rotatable barrier supporting one or more hooks.

[0006] The hooks are conveniently used for hanging the bathrobe before taking the shower so that it remains outside the cabinet; on termination of the shower, by rotating the barrier the bathrobe is brought into the interior of the shower cabinet to enable it to be put on without having to go outside, i.e. without having necessarily to open the shower cabinet.

[0007] However the bathrobe, which remains outside the shower cabinet, usually causes an unpleasant cold sensation when put on, because the temperature outside the shower cabinet is lower than the temperature inside it.

[0008] Moreover, in some cases, because of the structure fitted to the cabinet to support the barrier and enable it to be rotated, the lighting inside the shower cabinet is limited; a situation of this type can be unpleasant for some users.

[0009] The aim of the present invention is therefore to provide a support for bathrobes, underwear and the like, which enables these drawbacks to be overcome.

[0010] In particular, the support of the invention enables the bathrobe to remain outside the shower cabinet while showering, and be brought inside to be put on.

[0011] With this aim, an object of the invention is to provide a support which limits the unpleasant cold sensation caused by contact between the skin and the bathrobe fabric when the user puts on the bathrobe inside the shower cabinet.

[0012] Another object of the invention is to provide a support which always ensures good lighting both inside and in proximity to the shower cabinet.

[0013] This aim, and the stated and other objects, are attained according to the invention by a support for bathrobes, underwear and the like in accordance with the accompanying claims.

[0014] Further characteristics and advantages will be more apparent from the ensuing description of a preferred but non-exclusive embodiment of the support of

the invention, illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is an outside perspective view of a shower cabinet provided with a support according to the present invention, with the barrier closed towards the inside and the towel holder accessible from the outside;

Figure 2 shows an internal lower portion of the shower cabinet of Figure 1, with the barrier closed towards the outside and the towel holder accessible from the inside;

Figure 3 shows a cross-section through the cabinet of the invention, with the barrier closed towards the outside and the towel holder accessible from the inside of the shower cabinet;

Figure 4 shows a cross-section through the cabinet of the invention, with the barrier in an intermediate position between open and closed;

Figure 5 shows a cross-section through the cabinet of the invention, with the barrier closed towards the inside and the towel holder accessible from the outside of the shower cabinet;

Figure 6 shows a detail of the slidable connection between the barrier and the base; and

Figure 7 shows a detail of the upper part of the support.

[0015] With reference to said figures, these show a support for bathrobes, underwear and the like, indicated overall by the reference numeral 1.

[0016] In the accompanying figures, the support 1 is shown connected to a shower cabinet, consequently the letter I indicates the space inside the shower cabinet while the letter E indicates the space outside.

[0017] The support 1 comprises a frame 2 to which a concave barrier 3 constructed for example of glass or plastic material, preferably transparent, is rotatably connected; the support 1 also comprises a towel holder 4 in particular for a bathrobe.

[0018] Advantageously, the towel holder 4 presents means in its interior for heating the bathrobe, to enable the user to take the bathrobe already warm.

[0019] The frame 2 comprises a base 5 to which there are connected at least two uprights 6 joined together at their top by at least one stiffening element 7.

[0020] The base 5 and the stiffening element 7 present respectively first and second guide means 8, 9 for the concave barrier.

[0021] The first guide means 8 comprise a least one perimetral channel 11 provided on the base 5, in which support wheels 12 for the barrier 3 are movable.

[0022] The second guide means 9 comprise a surface of the stiffening element 7 slidably connected to a portion of the barrier 3.

[0023] In the illustrated example the stiffening element 7 consists of a metal ring fixed to the uprights 6, the second guide means 9 consisting of the inner sur-

face of the metal ring, on which the upper edge of the barrier 3 slides.

[0024] The uprights 6 also present gaskets 15, 16 for water-tightness; in particular the gasket 15 is arranged to lock the barrier 3 in its open or closed position and is formed of plastic material, whereas the gasket 16 acts as a drip remover when the barrier 3 is rotating and is formed of plastic material with a soft end.

[0025] The towel holder 4 is connected to a cross-piece 17 fixed to an upper edge of the barrier 3 and comprises electrical resistance heating elements in its interior.

[0026] The crosspiece 17 presents first sliding contacts 18 connected to the resistance elements (via the electric cables 19).

[0027] The sliding contacts 18 are connectable to second contacts 20 arranged on the second guide means 9 and connected to the electric power supply.

[0028] The support 1 also comprises an upper cover element 21 carrying at least one lighting lamp, not shown for simplicity.

[0029] The upper cover element 21 comprises, embedded in the material, optical and/or electroluminescent fibres 22, fed by the lamp.

[0030] The concave barrier 3 also presents the optical fibres and/or electroluminescent lighting fibres 22, also embedded in the material.

[0031] Preferably, the optical fibres and/or electroluminescent fibres are embedded in rods of transparent material such as glass or PVC, the rods being connected to or embedded in the material of the upper element 21 and/or of the barrier 3.

[0032] The electrical power is the same for the lamp and for the resistance elements, the source being the lighting point in the ceiling.

[0033] In a preferred embodiment the base 5 presents a box structure for containing underwear or the like, for example, as shown in the accompanying figures, the base 5 presents an aperture 23 facing inwards and an aperture 24 facing outwards from the shower cabinet, when the support 1 has been installed.

[0034] In the interior of the box base there is provided a removable container of plastic material.

[0035] In addition, advantageously, there is provided a switch external to the shower cabinet to switch on the lamp and activate the resistance heating elements of the towel holder.

[0036] The operation of the support for bathrobes, underwear and the like according to the invention is apparent from that described and illustrated, and is substantially the following.

[0037] The barrier 3 is previously put into the position indicated in Figure 1, the towel holder being consequently accessible from the outside of the shower cabinet but not from the inside.

[0038] The user places the bathrobe on the towel holder and operates the external switch to light the lamp and heat the resistance elements.

[0039] The user then enters through the shower cabinet door (a traditional door) and takes a shower; during this stage the barrier is maintained in its initial position, the bathrobe therefore not being accessible from the interior of the shower cabinet.

[0040] On finishing the shower, the user rotates the barrier 3 into the position shown in Figure 2, with the bathrobe accessible from inside the shower cabinet (but not from outside).

[0041] The user can therefore put on the bathrobe already warm (it having been heated by the resistance elements of the towel holder 4).

[0042] During the rotation, the gasket 16 removes the water deposited on the barrier and allows it to fall into the base 5; in contrast, the gasket 15 locks and retains the barrier 3 in its open or closed position (i.e. it acts as a limit stop).

[0043] In practice the materials used and the dimensions can be chosen at will according to requirements and to the state of the art.

Claims

1. A support (1) for bathrobes, underwear and the like comprising: a frame (2), to which a concave barrier (3) is rotatably connected, and a towel holder (4) in particular for a bathrobe, **characterised in that** said towel holder (4) presents means for heating said bathrobe, to enable a user to take the bathrobe already warm.
2. A support (1) as claimed in claim 1, **characterised in that** said frame (2) comprises at least one base (5) to which there are connected at least two uprights (6) joined together at their top by at least one stiffening element (7), said base (5) and said stiffening element (7) presenting respectively first and second guide means (8, 9) for said concave barrier (3).
3. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said first guide means (8) comprise a least one perimetral channel (11) provided on said base (5), in which support wheels (12) for said barrier (3) are movable.
4. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said second guide means (9) comprise a surface of the stiffening element (7) to which a portion of the barrier (3) is slidably connected.
5. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said uprights (6) present gaskets (15, 16) for water-tightness, a first gasket (15) being arranged to lock said barrier (3) in its open or closed position, a second gasket

(16) acting as a drip remover when said barrier (3) rotates.

6. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said towel holder (4) is connected to a crosspiece (17) fixed to an upper edge of said barrier (3). 5
7. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said base (5) presents a box structure for containing underwear or the like, said base presenting an aperture (23) facing inwards and an aperture (24) facing outwards from the shower cabinet when the support (1) has been installed. 10 15
8. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said towel holder (4) comprises electrical resistance heating elements. 20
9. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said crosspiece (17) presents first sliding contacts (18) connected to said resistance elements and connectable to second contacts (20) arranged on said second guide means (9) and connected to the electric power supply. 25
10. A support (1) for bathrobes, underwear and the like comprising: a frame (2), to which a concave barrier (3) is rotatably connected, and a towel holder (4) in particular for a bathrobe, **characterised by** comprising an upper cover element (21) supporting at least one lighting lamp. 30 35
11. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said upper cover element (21) comprises optical and/or electroluminescent fibres (22), fed by said lamp. 40
12. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said concave barrier (3) presents optical fibres and/or electroluminescent lighting fibres 22. 45
13. A support (1) as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** said optical fibres and/or electroluminescent fibres (22) are embedded in rods of transparent material such as glass or PVC. 50
14. A shower cabinet **characterised by** comprising a support (1) for bathrobes, underwear and the like, as claimed in one or more of the preceding claims. 55

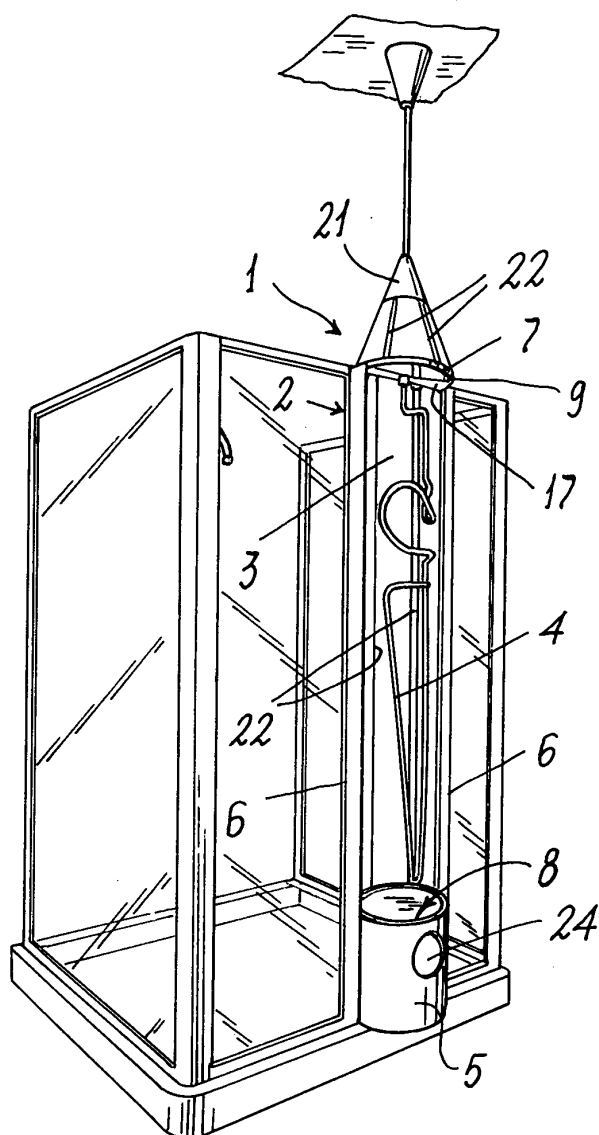


FIG. 1

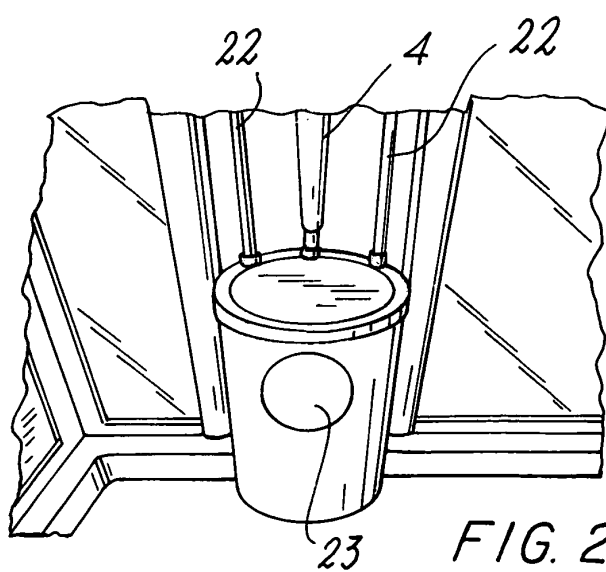


FIG. 2

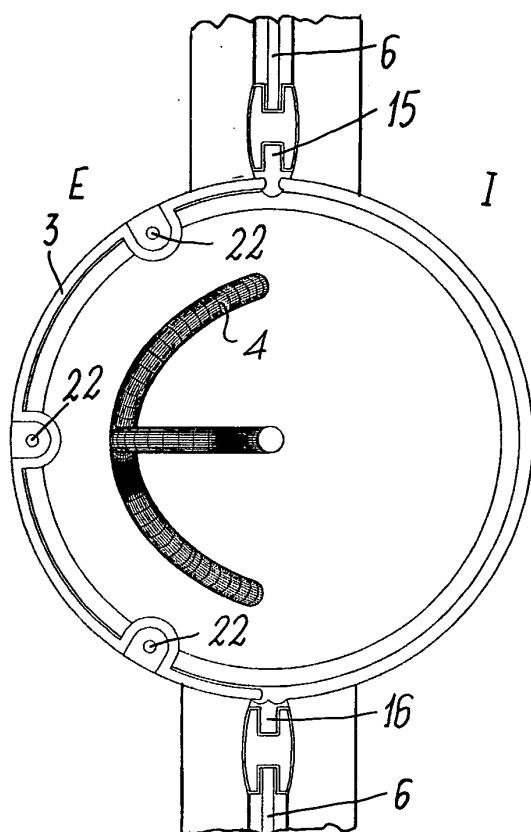


FIG. 3

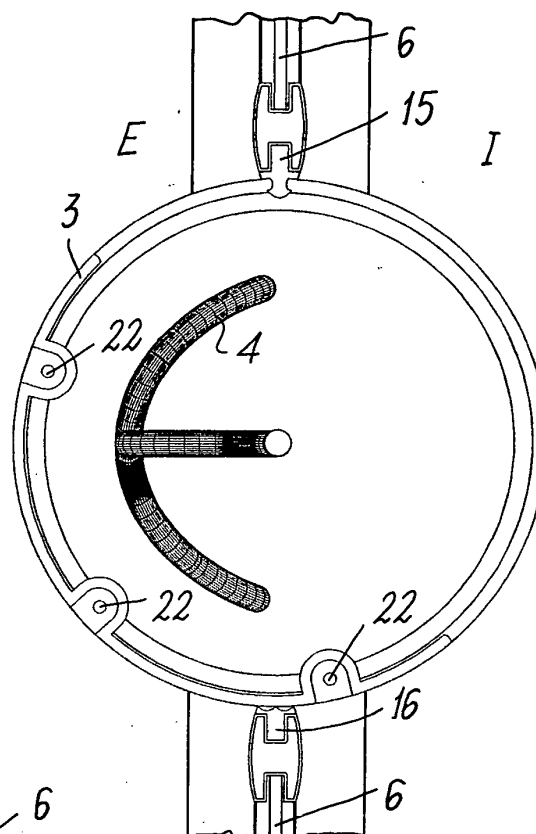


FIG. 4

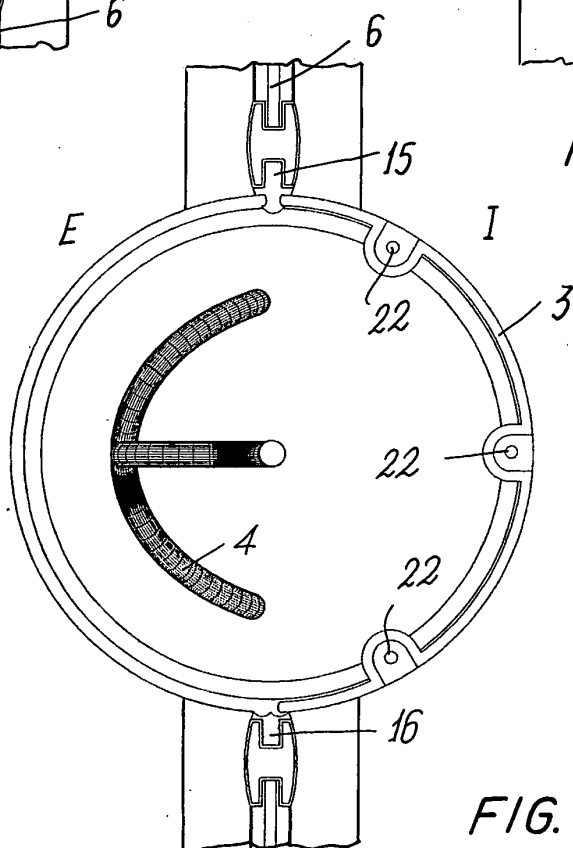


FIG. 5

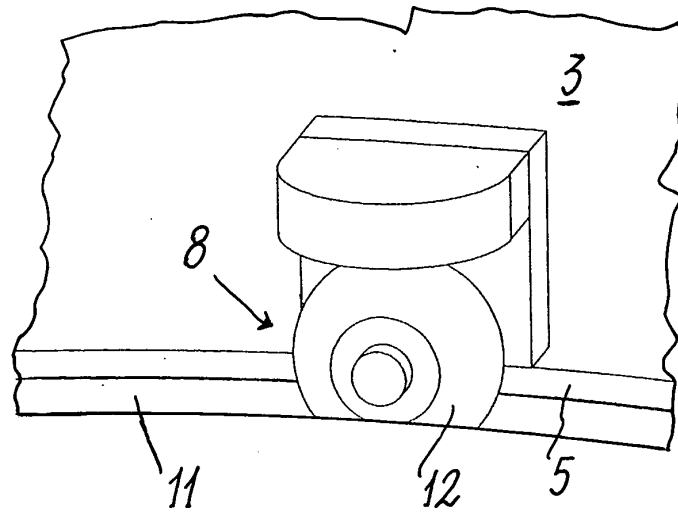


FIG. 6

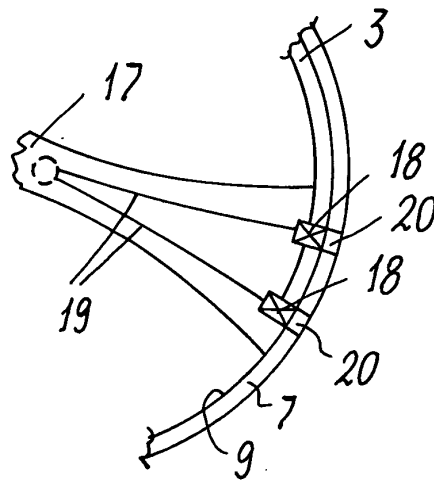


FIG. 7