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(54) Dual use packaging

(57) A box blank (10) that can be folded in order to be assembled into a complete box for the shipment of materials. The blank has indicia (24,26) printed on each of two opposite sides that identify the material to be contained within the completed, assembled box. Each indicia relates to a different material such that the box can be assembled in one orientation to have one set of indicia

end up on the exterior surface or assembled in a different orientation to have the other set of indicia end up on the exterior surface. In this manner, the same box blank can be used for different materials to be shipped within the completed box. In the exemplary embodiment, the different materials relate to (a) diagnostic or clinical specimens and (b) exempt human or animal specimens.

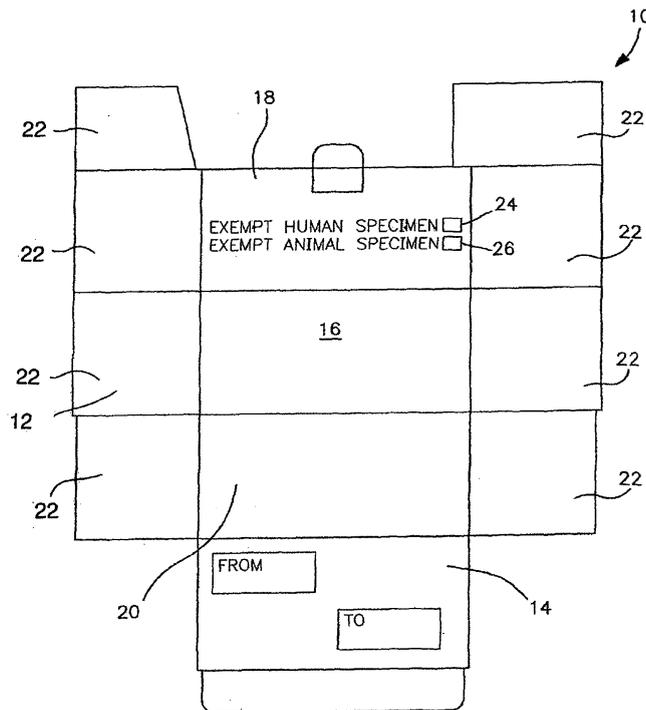


FIG. 1

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Description

Reference to Related Cases

[0001] This application is based upon and hereby claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/748,516, filed December 8, 2005.

Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to an unassembled blank for producing a box carton and, more particularly, to a carton blank having different indicia on opposite sides of the blank to allow the user to selectively assemble the box having different indicia appearing on the exterior of the assembled box.

Background of the Invention

[0003] There are currently used, various packages or boxes for shipping certain materials that are classified as materials that require some type of notice on the exterior of the package so that persons that come in contact with such packages during the shipping process are made aware of the special classification of the contents.

[0004] One of such types of boxes is used to contain and ship human or animal materials, such as specimens, for testing. With those materials, for example, there are different labeling requirements for such shipments, for example, if the material is an exempt human or animal specimen, there is one criterion for the labeling, whereas, if the material is a diagnostic or clinical specimen, there is a different criterion for that labeling. In each instance, the labeling requirement must be complied with in order to ship those materials.

[0005] With such materials, however, it is quite common for the same shipper to be involved in both types of these materials and, therefore, that shipper must comply with the criteria governing the labeling requirements of both types of materials.

[0006] There is, therefore, a difficulty in that the differing labels on such boxes must be specially and properly labeled for the particular contents and, thus, a party shipping such materials must inventory different unassembled box blanks that have the individual labels for each type of material that is intended to be shipped so that the shipments will be properly labeled. The different labeling requirements therefore require the shipper to have separate inventorying, stock control and the like for each of the differently labeled box blanks in order to carry out the shipping functions.

[0007] As such, it would be advantageous if the shippers of such specimen materials could reduce the number of different labeled packages or boxes by having a box blank that could be used for more than one classification of such materials.

Summary of the Invention

[0008] In accordance with the present invention, there is a box blank that can be folded so as to be assembled to form a box for transporting materials where such materials require different labels so as to use the same box blank for two different classes of materials. As used herein, the term "blank" or "blanks" is intended to refer to a flat, unassembled package or box and is the form in which packages or boxes are maintained in inventory so as to minimize the amount of space taken up by the packages or boxes. As such, when the actual shipment is desired to be constructed or assembled, the blank is simply assembled into the form of a completed box or package for insertion of the materials and then shipped to the intended destination.

[0009] With the present invention, the same unassembled box blank has different labeling on the opposite exterior surfaces in accordance with the requirements of the differing contents to be inserted into the eventual assembled box. The blank has otherwise the normal score or fold lines that enable the user to fold the carton in forming the ultimate box and the folding and assembly of the blank into the completed box is carried out in conventional manner.

[0010] By having the different labeling printed on the opposed surfaces of the unassembled box blank, the user can fold the blank to form the box with either labeling ending outwardly, that is, where one class of material i.e. exempt human or animal specimens is to be contained with the box, the shipper simply folds the box blank in assembling that box so that the appropriate labeling for that type of specimen ends up on the exterior of the box and similarly, if the material is intended to be diagnostic or clinical specimens, the shipper inverts the flat, unassembled carton and therefore uses the same box blank to make up the box with the alternative labeling on the outside.

[0011] There may be instructions on the blank as to which side should be facing upwardly in order to have the completed box display on its exterior, the desired labeling for the particular materials contained therein.

[0012] In the exemplary embodiment, there is also a location, such as printed square boxes, that can be marked in some manner manually by the shipper to indicate whether the material contained within the box is a exempt human specimen or an exempt animal specimen.

[0013] In the aforesaid manner, the same flattened box blank can be used for two different classes of materials requiring different labeling and, therefore the inventory and inventory control can be simplified by having the same box blank that is usable for different labeled material.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0014] Fig. 1 is a top view of a flattened, unassembled box blank having labeling printed thereon for use with

exempt human specimens or exempt animal specimens;

[0015] Fig. 2 is an assembled box constructed from the unassembled blank of Fig. 1;

[0016] Fig. 3 is a top view of a flattened, unassembled box blank having labeling thereon for use with diagnostic or clinical specimens; and

[0017] Fig. 4 is an assembled box constructed from the unassembled blank of Fig. 3.

Detailed Description of the Invention

[0018] Turning first to Fig. 1, there is shown a plan view of an unassembled box blank 10 of the present invention and where the box blank has an exterior surface 12 facing upwardly in the Figure. As can be seen, the box blank 10 has a plurality of normal panels for a blank used for assembled into a completed box, that is, there is a top panel 14, a bottom panel 16, side panels 18, 20 and end panels 22.

[0019] In the embodiment of Fig. 1, there is indicia printed on one of the side panels 18 that designates the exterior surface 12 for use with exempt human specimens or exempt animal specimens. Accordingly, to construct or assemble a completed box for use with such materials, the exterior surface 12 would be facing downwardly and then assembled in the conventional manner.

[0020] The indicia printed on the top panel 14 can be used to locate and insert the addresses of the shipping and receiving parties in a normal manner, however, the indicia printed on the side panel 18 comprises the proper labeling indicia that allows the shipper to use the blank 10 to assemble a completed box for shipping exempt animal specimens and exempt human specimens. There is also a location on the side panel 18, such the boxes 24, 26 for the shipper to mark, such as by a check mark or x mark, that more clearly defines the particular material as either exempt human or animal specimens.

[0021] While the exemplary embodiment of Fig. 1 illustrates the location of the indicia to be on the top panel 14 and one of the side panels 18, it can be seen that others of the panels could be used for locating the labeling indicia and/or the addressing information and, for the matter, the addressing and labeling indicia could alternatively, be printed on the same panel.

[0022] Turning now to Fig. 2, taken along with Fig. 1, there is shown a perspective view of a completed box 28 that has been assembled from the box blank 10 of Fig. 1. As such the completed box 28 can contain exempt human specimens or exempt animal specimens with the specific type of specimen marked in one of the boxes 24, 26 printed on the side panel 18. The addressing indicia containing the location for the identification of the shipping and the receiving party is printed on the top surface 14 that is automatically provided in that location during the assembly of the box blank 10.

[0023] Turning now to Fig. 3, there is shown a plan view of the unassembled box blank 10 of the present invention and where the box blank has an exterior surface

30 facing upwardly in the Figure. The exterior surface 30 is the opposite of that shown as the exterior surface 12 of Fig. 1 and has different indicia printed thereon i.e., the box blank 10 in the orientation of Fig. 1 has simply been inverted to that of Fig. 3. Again the same panels of the box blank 10 are shown as were identified with respect to Fig. 1 but now the exterior surface 30 is facing upwardly.

[0024] As can be seen in Fig. 3, the side panel 18 now has indicia in the form of labeling that states the contents to be shipped in the eventual completed box to be diagnostic or clinical specimens.

[0025] Turning, finally, to Fig. 4, taken along with Fig. 3, there is shown a perspective view of the completed box 32 where the exterior of the box 32 is the exterior surface 30 illustrated in Fig. 3 and therefore the labeling on the side panel 18 states that the materials within the box 32 are diagnostic specimens or clinical specimens.

[0026] As can be seen therefore, the user can position the unassembled box blank 10 with the desired labeling in the proper orientation for the assembly of the box 32 for the particular material to be shipped therein.

[0027] In the exemplary embodiment, the contents of the eventual box can be (1) diagnostic specimens or clinical specimens or (2) exempt human specimens or exempt animal specimens and that identification is necessary for the shipping of that material.

[0028] There may also be instructions for the assembly of the box to illustrate to the user which exterior surface needs to be in the upwardly facing direction to achieve the desired completed box and there are conventional score or fold lines that facilitate the user's folding portions of the box blank in order to complete the finished box. By following the instructions, the user can assemble the box with the desired labeling on the exterior of the finished box.

[0029] In addition, while the exemplary embodiment is specifically disclosed to be used for materials that are specimens, it can easily be appreciated that the technique of the present invention can be used in other fields and with other materials with the use of a box blank having different indicia printed on opposite sides of the box blank to relate to different contents depending on the assembly of the completed box.

[0030] Those skilled in the art will readily recognize numerous adaptations and modifications which can be made to the box blank and completed box of the present invention which will result in an improved packaging system, yet all of which will fall within the scope and spirit of the present invention as defined in the following claims. Accordingly, the invention is to be limited only by the following claims and their equivalents.

Claims

1. An unassembled blank for being assembled into a box for shipping materials, the blank having oppo-

- sitely facing surfaces, one of the opposite facing surfaces having indicia indicative of a particular material to be shipped in the assembled box and the other of the surfaces having different indicia indicative of a different material to be shipped in the assembled box. 5
2. The unassembled blank as defined in claim 2 wherein the indicia is labeling indicia. 10
3. The unassembled blank as defined in claim 2 wherein each of the oppositely facing surfaces has different shipping labeling legal requirements
4. The unassembled blank as defined in claim 1 wherein one surface has labeling indicia indicative of shipping an exempt human or animal specimen and the other surface having labeling indicia indicative of diagnostic or clinical specimens. 15
20
5. A method of assembling a box from a box blank having oppositely facing surfaces with different labeling on the opposite surfaces indicative of different materials to be contained within the box, the method comprising folding the blank to form the box in a manner to have the desired labeling appearing on the exterior of the box. 25
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the desired labeling on one surface relates to the shipment of diagnostic specimens of clinical specimens. 30
7. The method of claim 6 wherein the desired labeling on the other surface relates to the shipment of exempt human specimens and exempt animal specimens. 35
8. A box for use in the shipment of differing materials, the box comprised of a plurality of panels including side panels, a top panel, a bottom panel and end panels, at least one of the panels having an exterior surface having indicia identifying the material to be shipped within the box and at least one of the panels having an interior surface having indicia identifying another, different material to be shipped within the box. 40
45
9. The box of claim 8 wherein the exterior surface of the at least one panel has labeling indicia identifying the material to be diagnostic or clinical specimens. 50
10. The box of claim 8 wherein the exterior surface of the at least one panel has labeling indicia identifying the material to be exempt human or exempt human specimens. 55

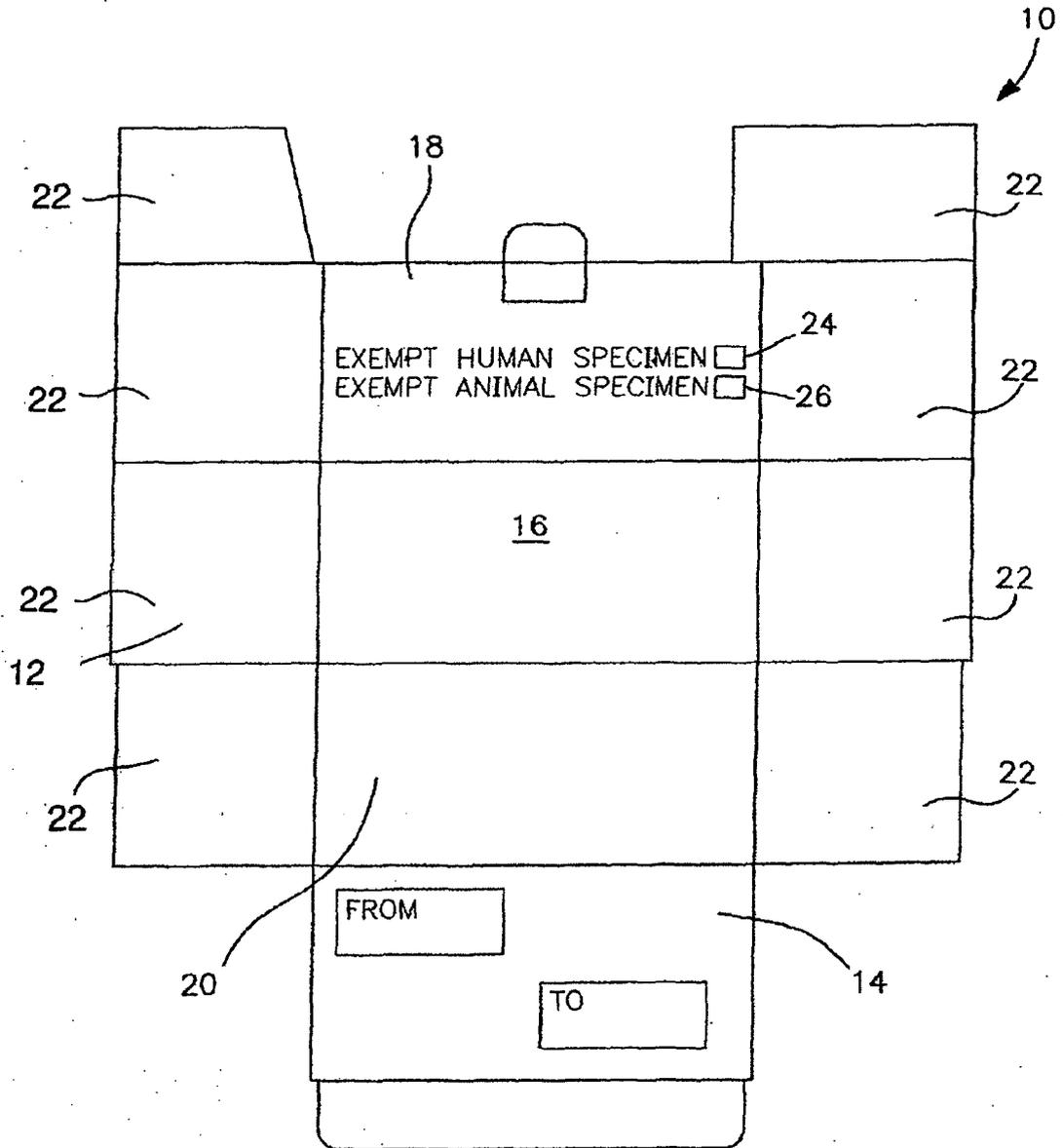


FIG. 1

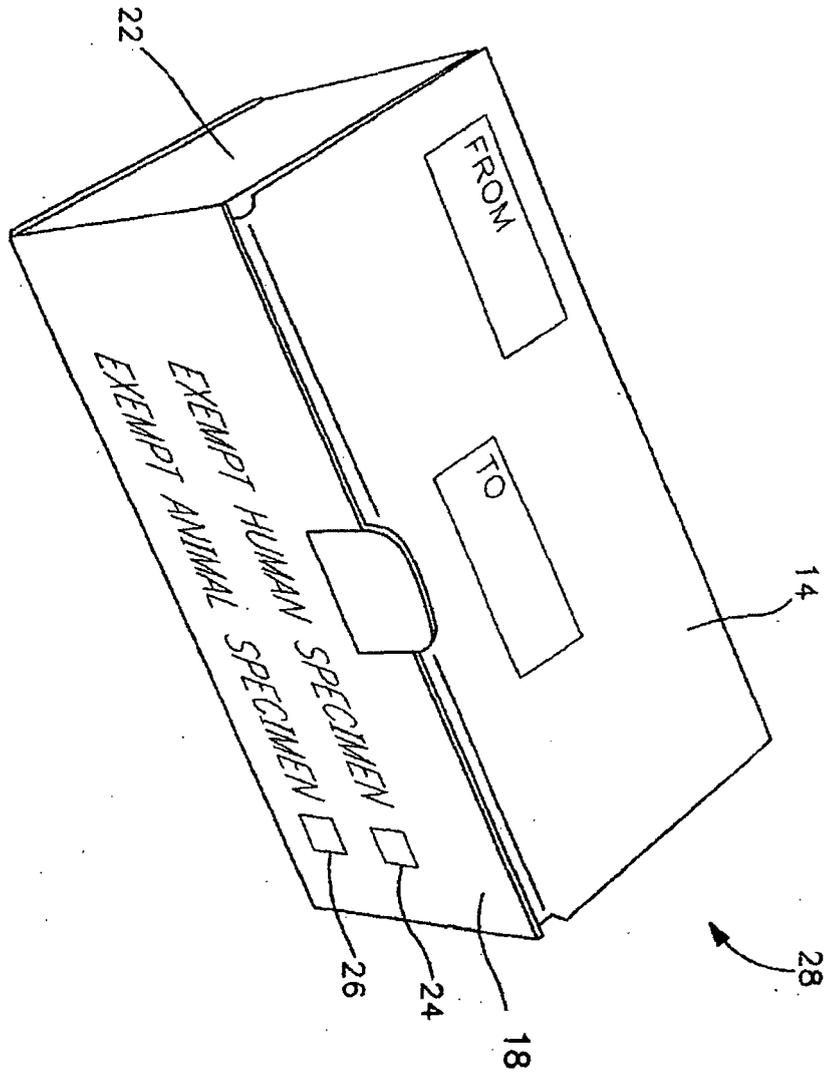


FIG. 2

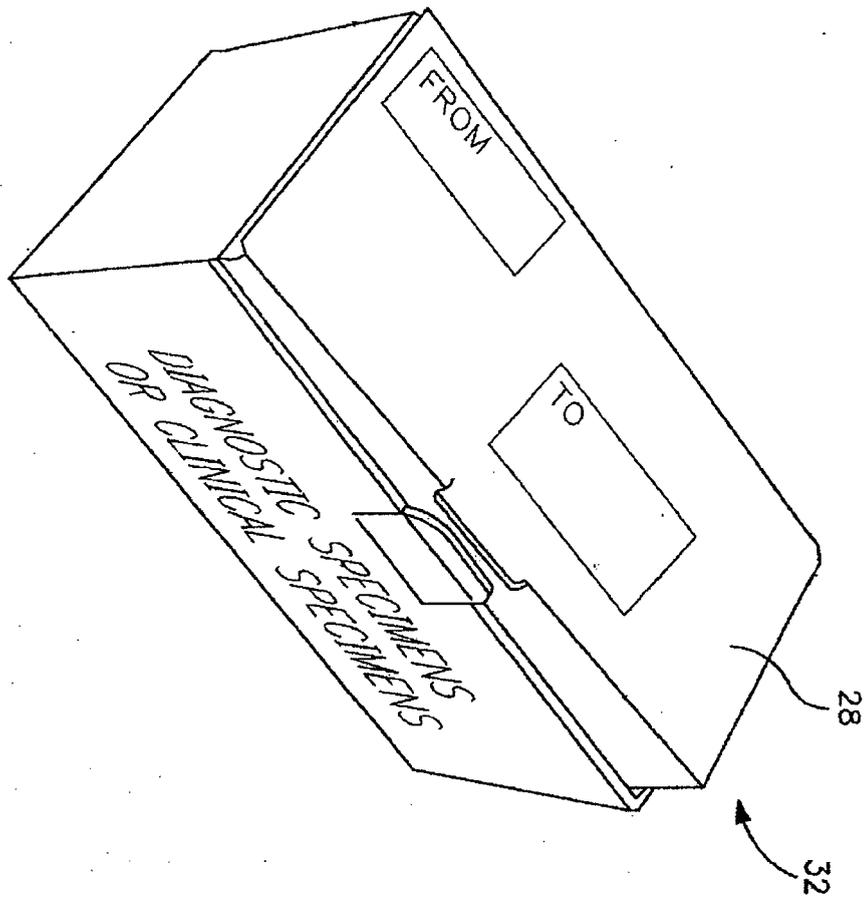


FIG. 4



DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
A	US 2005/236464 A1 (COHEN PATRICE [CA]) 27 October 2005 (2005-10-27) * paragraph [0029] * -----	1,5,8	INV. B65D5/42
A	US 2003/150773 A1 (DENNIS ANGELA [CA] ET AL) 14 August 2003 (2003-08-14) * paragraph [0038] * -----	1,5,8	
A	WO 97/11890 A (PETERSON BECK A S [DK]; SCHOU ROAR BENDTSEN [DK]) 3 April 1997 (1997-04-03) * figures 1-3 * -----	1,5,8	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC) B65D
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 20 March 2007	Examiner Jervelund, Niels
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