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(54) **Paintbrush holder**

(57) This invention provides an applicator and lid support (100) for holding a fluid applicator and a lid of a fluid container (108). The support comprises attachment means (102) arranged to attach the support to the con-

tainer in an attached position, a first holding means (104) for holding the fluid applicator and a second holding means (106) for holding the lid of the fluid container.

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Description

[0001] This invention relates to a support for a fluid applicator and lid of a fluid container. Particularly, but not exclusively, the invention relates to a support for a paint brush and paint tin lid.

[0002] The invention can be used with all types of fluid containers such as paint tins or varnish tins and all types of applicators, such as brushes, sponges, pens, rollers etc., from which a fluid might drip during use.

[0003] When a paint brush is used to apply paint from a paint tin, there is commonly a problem of paint dripping from the brush onto surfaces that must be kept clean. This can cause a lot of mess and disruption whilst painting. In order to minimise paint dripping from the brush the user often wipes the brush against the rim of the paint tin. This causes a buildup of paint on the rim and can lead to paint dripping down the external walls of the tin. If paint builds up on the rim of the tin the lid will no longer fit tightly, and can result in the paint drying up when it is stored. This can make the tin difficult to re-open. Furthermore, the user may require a place to temporarily rest the brush, without the brush being cleaned. A common solution is to use the lid as a support for the brush, but this again can lead to paint dripping onto clean surfaces and becoming built up on the lid preventing it from sealing the can.

[0004] The present invention provides an applicator and lid support for holding a fluid applicator and a lid of a fluid container. The support comprises: attachment means arranged to attach the support to the container in an attached position; first holding means for holding the fluid applicator; and second holding means for holding the lid.

[0005] This allows the lid and the applicator to be held simultaneously by the support to provide a compact arrangement having a relatively small 'footprint' that the user can easily carry and move around. The applicator is held so that any excess fluid left on it will not drip or be otherwise transferred to surfaces that are clean. Furthermore, the lid is securely held with the container so that it is readily available at a time when the container must be sealed, thus preventing the lid from being lost or otherwise misplaced.

[0006] The present invention overcomes the problem of paint dripping onto clean surfaces associated with not having a suitable support for both the brush and lid. The present invention solves these problems by providing a simple and compact support for a paint tin lid and brush. Particularly, the support keeps the lid where it is easily found at a later stage, and store the brush in such a way that paint is not dripped on or otherwise transferred to any unwanted surfaces or built up on the rim of the paint tin.

[0007] Once all of the fluid required has been removed from the container, or the container is empty, the support may be put inside the container for disposal. As the rim and lid of the container have been kept free from fluid,

the lid will fit tightly and prevent any fluid escaping from the container. Clean disposal of the container is important if it contains toxic materials such as paint, varnish or wood stain. The present invention ensures no fluid is spilt and the lid is tightly secured before disposal. The container can then be disposed of or recycled in a safe and environmentally friendly manner in accordance with rules and guidelines on disposing of toxic or volatile oxidising compounds.

[0008] The first holding means may comprise an applicator support member arranged to support the fluid applicator. This provides a temporary place to rest the applicator such that it is retained by the support. The applicator support member may be arranged such that the lid can still be attached and removed whilst the support is in that attached position.

[0009] The first holding means may further comprise a magnet arranged to retain the fluid applicator on the applicator support member. This allows secure retention of the applicator with the support. A typical paintbrush has a metallic body and the magnet is provided to attract this metal or the metal which secures the bristles, and provide a force adequate to prevent the brush from sliding off the support member.

[0010] The first holding means may comprise guide means arranged to facilitate holding of the fluid applicator in a desired position. The guide means is arranged to encourage the user to align the applicator on the support such that the tip or end loaded with fluid is overhanging the support and is above the opening in the container. Thus any part of the applicator likely or able to drip fluid is held over the opening. This ensures that any excess paint dripping from the applicator falls into the container.

[0011] The applicator support member may be inclined relative to the container when the support is in the attached position. This ensures that any fluid dripping from the applicator falls into the opening of the container.

[0012] The applicator support member may be arranged to cover part of the opening of the container, and may comprise a circular segment, such as a generally semi-circular segment.

[0013] The applicator is preferably a semi-circular shape such that it partially covers the opening of a cylindrical fluid container. This provides an adequately sized applicator support member, but still allows the fluid in the container to be accessed during use, e.g. for dipping a paint brush in a paint tin. The semi-circular shape also allows the lid to be removed and replaced whilst the support is attached to the container.

[0014] The support may comprise a wipe bar for wiping excess fluid from the fluid applicator, the wipe bar being spaced from an edge of the applicator support member. This allows any excess fluid to be wiped off the applicator before it is used to apply the fluid. The wipe bar is located so that the user can easily dip the applicator into the fluid and then wipe any off any excess using the wipe bar.

[0015] The ends of the wipe bar may be spaced from the ends of the edge of the applicator support member.

The wipe bar is spaced from the edge of the support member so that no fluid is transferred to the support member, thus helping to keep the support clean and tidy. Similarly, the ends of the wipe bar are spaced from the ends of the edge of the support member in order to ensure transfer of fluid to the rim or exterior walls of the container is minimised. This prevents build up of fluid on the rim of the container, which ensures that it can effectively engage with the lid to seal the container.

[0016] The first holding means may be arranged to hold the fluid applicator in a first position, the second holding means may be arranged to hold the lid in a second position, and the second position may be beneath the first position in use. The applicator is arranged to be held above the lid so that the overall size of the support assembly is minimised. This reduces the footprint of the support and container and makes it easy to carry around and hold whilst it is in use. This compactness also minimises the risk of inadvertent paint transfer in use, e.g. while a support, lid brush and tin are being carried.

[0017] When the support is in the attached position, the lid in the second position may be arranged to rest on the top rim of the container. The second holding means may comprise an abutment member arranged to abut part of the lid to hold it against the top rim of the container and in the second position. The lid may be secured on the support by being wedged in between the abutment member and the rim of the container. The lid is then held in place by the friction fit.

[0018] The abutment member may comprise a wall having a tapered base extending from the applicator support member. The tapered wall of the abutment member helps ensure a tight fit.

[0019] When in use, a slot may be defined between the applicator support member and the top rim of the container, the lid being receivable in the slot when in the second position. The applicator support member and the rim of the container may define a slot to receive the lid and hold it securely in place. The slot may alternatively be defined by the applicator support member and a lid support surface. The lid support surface may be arranged above the rim of the container so that the lid does not rest on the rim.

[0020] The abutment member may further be arranged to limit the extent to which the lid is receivable in the slot. The amount which the lid can be pushed into the slot may be set by the position or angle of the abutment member.

[0021] The lid may be held in an upside down orientation to catch any dripping fluid on the 'inside' surface of the lid, ensuring no fluid drips onto the floor, since the 'inside' is facing upwards.

[0022] The second holding means may comprise a notch formed in a wall of the support and arranged to receive a part of the lid therein. Alternatively, there may be a pair of walls each with a notch. The notch may receive a lip around the circumference of the lid, thus improving the retention of the lid.

[0023] The wall or pair of walls may extend from the

applicator support member to the attachment means so that the support member is positioned above the opening of the container.

[0024] The attachment means may be arranged to attach to the exterior of the container. This secures the support tightly to the container and prevents it from becoming loose or falling off during use.

[0025] The attachment means may be arranged to attach only to the exterior of the container. The attachment means may attach only to the exterior of the container to ensure no fluid is transferred from the inside of the container to the support, thus keeping the support clean.

[0026] The attachment means may comprise a band, such as an open band, or a strap. The support may be attached to the container using a band or strap that provides a friction fit with the outer exterior wall of the container.

[0027] The band or strap may be arranged to attach to a position adjacent the opening of the container. The band is positioned below the rim of the container adjacent the opening such that the support member is correctly positioned above the opening.

[0028] The band or strap may be arranged to attach to a position spaced from the opening of the container. If the container has a carry handle attached via points adjacent the rim and near the opening (as is the case on some standard designs of paint tins), the band or strap may not fit in the same position. In this case the band or strap may be spaced apart from the upper rim of the container, such that it does not coincide with the position of the carry handle.

[0029] The band or strap is flexible and/or has fastening means such as hook and loop fastening means or magnetic fastening means. A flexible band or strap allows the fastening means to slip on or over a container of varying sizes. If the friction fit between the band and the container is not adequate to keep it in place a strap with hook and loop fastenings may be provided. The strap can be pulled tight and thus provide an improved attachment.

[0030] The support may comprise a detachably mounted container opener arranged to facilitate separating the lid of the container from the container. The container opener is provided to assist the user in opening the container before use. The container opener may be used to lever the lid from the container by inserting it between the container rim and the lid. The container opener may be attached via a magnet on the support.

[0031] Embodiments of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, by reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 shows an applicator and lid support according to an embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 2 shows a side and plan view of the support;

Figure 3 shows a side and plan view of the support

with an applicator and lid attached;

Figure 4 shows an applicator and lid support according to another embodiment of the invention; and

Figure 5 shows an applicator and lid support according to another embodiment of the invention.

[0032] Figure 1 shows an applicator and lid support 100 for holding a fluid applicator and a lid of a fluid container. The support 100 comprises attachment means 102 arranged to attach the support to the container in an attached position, a first holding means 104 for holding the fluid applicator, and a second holding means 106 for holding the lid of the fluid container. In the embodiment shown in Figure 1 the fluid container is a cylindrical paint tin 108, but in other embodiments the fluid container may be a container to hold other fluids such as varnish, lacquer, wood stain or similar fluids intended to be applied from the container by an applicator. In the embodiment shown in Figure 1 the fluid container is cylindrical in shape, but in other embodiments the fluid container may be any suitable shape such as square cuboid or rectangular cuboid, or any other known shape of container. The applicator may be any device suitable for applying the fluid from the container, and in this embodiment is a paint brush. In other embodiments the applicator may be a foam or sponge brush, roller, pen, other type of brush or other suitable applicator.

[0033] The support 100 is made from a plastics material such as polypropylene injection moulded plastic but in other embodiments may be made from metal or any other suitable material. In some embodiments, the support 100 may be coated with a non-stick material to allow fluid spilt on it during use to be easily wiped off. In other embodiments, the support 100 may also be coated in a material that is resistant to any solvents that may typically be used to remove any spilt fluid.

[0034] The support 100 of Figure 1 is shown in Figure 2, as a side view in the upper part of the figure and corresponding plan view below. The position of the container 108 is shown in broken lines. With reference to Figure 2, the first holding means 104 of the support 100 comprises an applicator support member 202 arranged to support the fluid applicator. In this embodiment the applicator support member comprises a support surface 203. The first holding means 104 comprises a magnet 204 arranged to securely retain the fluid applicator on the applicator support surface 203. The magnet 204 is inlaid into a recessed portion of the support surface 203 so that it is flush with the rest of the surface. This provides a flat surface with no protrusions that may gather fluid spilt onto the support member. The support member can therefore be easily wiped clean and kept free from fluid. In other embodiments the magnet 204 may be applied or affixed to the support surface 203 so that it protrudes from the surface or is recessed into the surface. The magnet 204 is arranged to retain the applicator whilst the

support 100 is in use. In this embodiment the applicator is envisaged as a paintbrush with the bristles held by a metal band, as is well known in the art. The magnet 204 is arranged to retain such an applicator via the force acting between the magnet 204 and the metal of the paintbrush. The force applied to the paintbrush is adequate to keep it attached to the support whilst the paint tin is moved or carried around by the user. This prevents the brush from sliding or falling off the support member 202. In some other embodiments the applicator may have a magnet and the support member may comprise a metal portion to retain the applicator.

[0035] The magnet of this embodiment is one type of retaining means. In other embodiments different retaining means may be used. The retaining means may be a hook and loop fixing (e.g. Velcro™), an adhesive pad or a spring clip or fastener that may provide a friction fit with the applicator.

[0036] The first holding means 104 comprises guide means arranged to facilitate holding of the fluid applicator in a desired position. In the embodiment of Figure 2 the guide means is the position of the magnet 204 relative to an edge of the support member which is above the opening in the container when the support 100 is in the attached position. The guide means is arranged so that when the applicator is retained by the first holding means it is located in the desired position i.e. with the end of the applicator which carries the fluid being over the opening in the container. This is because, where the applicator is a brush, the end of the brush is most likely to drip fluid. This might not be true, for other types of applicator and the skilled person can design the support accordingly to teaching herein. The applicator is thus orientated with its elongate axis perpendicular to the edge of the support member. In an embodiment where the applicator is a paintbrush, the guide means will orientate the paintbrush such that the elongate axis of the handle is running perpendicular to the edge of the support member, with the bristles of the brush overhanging the edge of the support member 202 such that the bristles are neatly above the opening in the container. This ensures that any excess fluid dripping from the applicator falls into the container. In other embodiments the guide means may be markings, grooves or protrusions on the support member 202. In some embodiments, there may be no guide means.

[0037] As can be seen in the side view of Figure 2, the applicator support member 202 is inclined relative to the container when the support 100 is in the attached position. The support member 202 may be a surface inclined at a shallow acute angle, such as an angle up to 40 degrees such that the applicator is easily retained by the support surface. In other embodiments the support surface 202 is horizontal relative to the container. The first holding means 102 is arranged to hold the applicator in an inclined position, relative to the container, so that any fluid dripping from the applicator naturally falls into the opening of the container. Also, more space is provided between the handle of the applicator (e.g. brush) and the

surface of the lid being held. Therefore it is less likely that paint will be transferred from the lid to the hand of a user as the user picks up the handle.

[0038] Too large an angle may be undesirable, especially for smaller tins. This is because having a large angle may encourage a user's hand to come close to or into contact with the support surface when dipping the applicator (e.g. brush) into the paint during use. In one embodiment, the support surface is inclined at between 2 and 10 degrees. An angle of about 3 degrees has been found to work well to achieve a balance between the factors mentioned above.

[0039] Referring again to the plan view shown in Figure 2, the applicator support member 202 is arranged to cover part of the opening of the container. When in the attached position, the support 100 is arranged generally above the container so that the support member 202 is above the opening. The support member is arranged to cover part of the opening to allow access for the applicator to the fluid contained within the container. In the embodiment shown in Figure 2 the support member covers half of the opening of the container, but in other embodiments the support member 202 may cover less or more than a half. In yet other embodiments the support member 202 may cover between 20% and 80% of the opening. The support may be sized such that it allows sufficient space to access the opening in the container, yet still provides an adequate area to retain the applicator. The support may also be sized such that the lid can be removed and replaced whilst the support 100 is in the attached position.

[0040] Applicator support member 202 is shaped as a circular segment, such as a generally semi-circular segment. The radius of the semicircular support member may be generally equal to the radius of the container. An edge 210 of the support member runs generally along a chord of the circular cross section of the container. In some embodiments the edge 210 may pass through the centre of the opening of the container. The support member partially covers the opening and acts as a barrier to prevent objects or dust from falling into the fluid within the container.

[0041] The support 100 further comprises a wipe bar 206 for wiping excess fluid from the fluid applicator. The wipe bar is a strip or wire that can be used to scrape or wipe any excess fluid from the applicator to either ensure that it is correctly loaded with fluid before use, or to remove any remaining fluid after use. The wipe bar 206 comprises an elongate strip or bar attached at its distal ends to the support member via the edge 210. The wipe bar is located such that the applicator may be dipped into the fluid within the container and then wiped on the wipe bar in one simple motion of the user. The ends of the wipe bar 206 are spaced from ends of the edge of the applicator support member 202 such that the ends of the wipe bar are spaced from the circumference of the container. This ensures fluid dripping from the wipe bar does not fall onto the rim of the container. The wipe bar 206

is spaced from the support member 202 by a gap formed by indentation 208 which extends into the support member 202. In some embodiments the wipe bar may be spaced from the support member 202 without the need of the indentation 208. The spacing from the support member minimises transfer of fluid from the applicator or wipe bar to the support member 202, which should be kept free of fluid during use. The wipe bar 206 is positioned, approximately over the centre in this optional embodiment, of the opening in the container such that any excess fluid wiped from the applicator will fall into the opening. The wipe bar 206 is semicircular in cross section in order to provide an efficient shape to wipe or clean excess fluid from the applicator. The wipe bar is preferably made from metal to provide a stiff wipe bar able to withstand the force applied when the applicator is wiped across it. In other embodiments the wipe bar may be a plastics material, and may also be any other suitable material. The wipe bar may be integrally formed with the rest of the support 100, especially if made of a plastic material. In other embodiments the wipe bar 206 may be circular or square in cross section. A lozenge shaped cross-section of wipe bar has been found to be particularly advantageous. By 'lozenge shaped', we mean elongate with rounded ends, such as generally rectangular, with rounded ends. In yet other embodiments the support 100 may not be fitted with the wipe bar, in which case the paint brush is instead wiped on the edge of the support member 202. This provides a support 100 with fewer component parts which may reduce manufacturing costs.

[0042] The support 100 is shown in use, i.e. with a lid and applicator attached in Figure 3. The first holding means 104 is arranged to hold the fluid applicator in a first position, the second holding means 106 is arranged to hold the lid in a second position, and the second position is beneath the first position in use. The first holding means 104 is arranged to hold at least a tip of the fluid applicator over the opening of the container when the support is attached to the container in the attached position.

[0043] In this embodiment the applicator is a paintbrush and the lid that of a paint tin. The lid 304 has a planar main section 306 and a protruding ridge 308. The ridge is spaced from the circumference of the lid by a lip portion 310. The ridge 308 is sized to provide a friction fit with the internal wall of the container when the lid is used to seal the container. As can be seen in Figure 3, the applicator 302 is held above the lid 304 when the support 100 is in use. This ensures that the ensemble (i.e. the container and the support, holding both the applicator and lid) is compact whilst in use and has a small footprint when viewed from above the container. Having a compact assembly means that the assembly is less likely to come apart. For example, the lid is less likely to fall out or be knocked out of its slot. For example, the applicator is less likely to fall off or be knocked off its support surface. Holding the lid below the applicator in this way also ensures that any fluid that may have spread

onto the handle or shaft of the applicator will fall onto the lid. The lid is preferably held so that it is upside down, i.e. so that the ridge 308 is pointing upwards, in a direction away from the opening of the container. This means that any fluid will drip on the member intended to form the internal wall of the container when the lid is replaced on the container, ensuring any spilt fluid is returned to the container. This helps ensure the work area is kept clean and tidy whilst the support is in use. Also, if any fluid is already on the inside of the lid, then it will not drip onto the floor. In some embodiments the lid may be alternatively held with the ridge facing downwards, in a direction towards the opening of the container, but this may be less desirable for the reasons stated.

[0044] Whilst in the second position the lid is preferably arranged to rest on the top rim 312 of the container. The lid is therefore preferably arranged such that it rests between the top of the container and the applicator support member 202 when the lid is in the second position. In order to retain the lid in the second position, the second holding means 106 comprises an abutment member 314 arranged to abut part of the lid to hold it against the top rim 312 of the container. The abutment member 314 comprises a wall having a tapered base extending from the applicator support member. In other embodiments the base may be tapered. In yet other embodiments, the wall may have a notch formed within it - the notch is arranged to receive the lip portion 310 in use. Preferably, the ridge 308 is arranged to abut the wall of the abutment member 314 in use - this allows for a more compact assembly when the lid is being held in position. As shown in Figure 3, the lip portion 310 passes under the abutment member 314 in one embodiment - therefore a compact assembly is provided. The abutment member helps to provide a friction fit with the lid in order to retain it in the second position. The abutment member 314 is further arranged to limit the extent to which the lid is receivable in the slot. In other embodiments there may be a separate limiting means to determine how much of the lid may enter the slot. The lid is wedged between the abutment member 314 and the rim 312 of the container to keep it secured in place whilst the support 100 is in use.

[0045] A slot is defined between the applicator support member 202 and the top rim 312 of the container. In some embodiments the applicator support member comprises ribs 316 or protrusions, as are shown in the embodiment of Figure 3. The ribs or protrusions engage with the ridge 308 of the lid 304 when the lid is retained by the slot. The ribs or protrusions press down on the lid and help retain it in the second position during use. The ribs or protrusions also act to reduce contact between the applicator support member and the lid to reduce transfer of fluid from the lid to the support. In this embodiment, each rib also comprises a guide in the form of a tapered surface for guiding the lid into correct, desired engagement with the support as the lid is slid into the slot. The ribs therefore also help to provide a friction fit with the lid in order to retain it in the second position.

[0046] In some embodiments (not shown in the drawings), the second holding means comprises a slot formed between the applicator support member and a lid support surface arranged above the rim of the container. In this embodiment, when the lid is in the second position, it is held in place with no contact with the rim of the container. This may further reduce contact between the lid and the rim of the container, ensuring there is less, or no, unwanted transfer of fluid to the lid.

[0047] The support 100 preferably comprises two side walls each extending downwardly from the support member and connecting to the attachment means 102. The walls are arranged to locate the support member above the rim of the container such that a slot is formed in which the lid can be inserted. In some embodiments, some portions of the support, such as the walls, may be cored out. For example the support may comprise a frame. In another example, the applicator support surface may be a cored out frame. This reduces the volume of material required to manufacture the support and reduce the overall cost. A notch is formed in each of the walls and is arranged to receive a part of the lid therein. The notch is preferably sized to receive the lip portion 310 of the lid to help retain the lid in the second position. The notches further allow the lid to extend further into the slot in the attached position, by providing clearance for the widest points of the lid as it is inserted into the slot.

[0048] Referring back to Figure 1, attachment means 102 is arranged to attach to the exterior of the container. In a preferable embodiment the support is arranged to attach only to the exterior of the container, i.e. with no part contacting the interior or top surfaces of the container. This ensures that no fluid within the container comes into contact with the support 100, thus keeping the work area clean and tidy during use. The attachment means comprises a band, such as an open band that can wrap around part, or all, of the container and keep the support 100 in place during use. In some embodiments the band may extend around about half, or more than half, of the circumference of the container and is a semi-circular shape. In this embodiment the band is sized such that the overall dimensions of the support allow it to fit through the opening of the container so that it can be stored or disposed of within the container after use. In other embodiments the band may be any shape suitable to fit the shape of the container that the support 100 is intended to be used with. The band may have an open end such that it may slide over the end of the container. The band may be made from a flexible material such that it grips the container and provides a friction fit. Furthermore, the flexibility of the band may allow the support 100 to fit containers of varying sizes.

[0049] In order to provide a more secure fixing to the container, a fixing strap may be provided in some embodiments. The fixing strap has a first end which is attached to an open end of the band, and a second end which is free, such that it may wrap around the container. The second end of the fixing strap may comprise a hook

and loop fixing (e.g. Velcro™) such that it can be attached to a corresponding hook and loop fixing support 100. In some embodiments the fixing strap may be formed of two parts, each of which has one end attached to each of the open ends of the band. In some embodiments the fixing strap may be made from an elastic material. In some embodiments the fastening means may comprise a magnetic strip to hold the support in place. In yet further embodiments there may be no fixing strap, in which case the band is retained only by a tight friction fit.

[0050] In the embodiment shown in Figure 1, the band or strap is arranged to attach to a position adjacent the opening of the container. When in use the support 100 is preferably positioned adjacent the rim 312 of the container. In other embodiments, such as that shown in Figure 4, the band or strap is arranged to attach to a position spaced from the opening or rim of the container. In this embodiment, the support 100 further comprises panels 402 that extend from the band to the sidewalls in order to space the band from the opening of the container. Alternatively, the sidewalls themselves may be extended in length to space the band from the rim or opening of the container. This arrangement is preferable when the support is used in conjunction with a container comprising a carry handle 404, as illustrated in Figure 4. In this embodiment the carry handle is attached to the container via points adjacent the opening, and thus prevents the support from being located adjacent the rim or opening. The panels 402 extend below the position of the carry handle attachment and allow the band or strap to extend around the container and hold it in place.

[0051] In another embodiment the support 100 further comprises a detachably mounted container opener 502 arranged to facilitate separating the lid of the container from the container. The container opener 502 is shaped such that it may be forced between the lid and rim of the container to allow the lid to be removed. In some embodiments the container opener may accordingly be a strip or otherwise flat piece of material suitable for levering the lid from the container. In some embodiments the container opener 502 may be made from metal and retained on the support 100 by a magnet 504.

[0052] In use the support 100 is attached to the container so that it is in the attached position, before the container has been opened. With the support in place the user is still able to access the lid and open the container. In some embodiments the support can be attached to the container in the attached position after the lid has been removed. The user may fix the lid of the container into the second holding means by wedging it into the slot between the support member and rim of the container. This ensures that the lid and container are kept together so that the lid is not lost and can be returned to the container so that it may be resealed when required. With the lid secured in the second holding means the user may commence using the applicator to apply fluid from the container. The support is arranged such that whilst attached to the container the opening is still ac-

cessible so that the applicator can be dipped into the fluid within the container. Each time the applicator is dipped in the fluid the applicator may be wiped on the wipe bar in order to remove any excess fluid from the applicator.

5 The removed fluid will drip back into the container, and prevent the user from having to wipe the applicator on the rim of the container. This ensures that the rim does not become covered in fluid and preventing the lid from resealing the container after use. If the user wishes to temporarily store the applicator, this may be done by securing it via the first holding means. The applicator is thus safely stored such that any excess fluid that remains on it will drip back into the container. This ensures that the work area is kept tidy and free of the fluid. The arrangement of the first and second holding positions, i.e. with the applicator located above the lid, means that the overall size of the support and container assembly is kept to a minimum. The assembly is therefore small and compact, and can easily be held and moved by the user.

10 **[0053]** Once the user has finished applying fluid from the container the lid may be removed from the second holding means and secured back onto the container to seal the opening. The applicator, once cleaned of any remaining fluid, can be returned to the first holding means for storage. The container and applicator are now secured for neat, efficient, long term storage if desired. If after use the container is empty, or the remaining fluid is no longer required, the user may wish to dispose of the container and its remaining contents. The support may then be removed from the attached position and put inside the container via the opening. The lid can then be sealed so that any remaining fluid cannot escape. This allows both the container and support to be disposed of cleanly and safely, which is especially important when the container holds toxic fluid that may be damaging to the environment.

15 **[0054]** Various modifications may be made to the present invention without departing from its scope (as defined by the claims).

Claims

1. An applicator and lid support for holding a fluid applicator and a lid of a fluid container, the support comprising:

attachment means arranged to attach the support to the container in an attached position;
first holding means for holding the fluid applicator; and
second holding means for holding the lid.

2. The support of claim 1 wherein the first holding means comprises an applicator support member arranged to support the fluid applicator, and optionally wherein the first holding means comprises a magnet arranged to retain the fluid applicator on the applicator.

cator support member.

3. The support of any preceding claim wherein the first holding means comprises guide means arranged to facilitate holding of the fluid applicator in a desired position. 5
4. The support of claim 2 or claim 3, wherein the applicator support member is inclined relative to the container when the support is in the attached position. 10
5. The support of any of claims 2 to 4 wherein the applicator support member is arranged to cover part of an opening of the container, and optionally wherein the applicator support member comprises a circular segment, such as a generally semi-circular segment. 15
6. The support of any preceding claim comprising a wipe bar for wiping excess fluid from the fluid applicator, the wipe bar being spaced from an edge of the applicator support member, and optionally wherein ends of the wipe bar are spaced from ends of the edge of the applicator support member. 20
7. The support of any preceding claim wherein the first holding means is arranged to hold the fluid applicator in a first position, the second holding means is arranged to hold the lid in a second position, and the second position is beneath the first position in use. 25
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8. The support of claim 7 wherein when the support is in the attached position, the lid in the second position is arranged to rest on the top rim of the container, and optionally wherein the second holding means comprises an abutment member arranged to abut part of the lid to hold it against the top rim of the container and in the second position, and further optionally wherein the abutment member comprises a wall having a tapered base extending from the applicator support member. 35
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9. The support of claim 8 wherein, in use, a slot is defined between the applicator support member and the top rim of the container, the lid being receivable in the slot when in the second position, and optionally wherein the abutment member is further arranged to limit the extent to which the lid is receivable in the slot. 45
10. The support of any preceding claim wherein the second holding means comprises a notch formed in a wall of the support and arranged to receive a part of the lid therein. 50
11. The support of any preceding claim wherein the attachment means is arranged to attach to the exterior of the container. 55
12. The support of any preceding claim wherein the attachment means comprises a band, such as an open band, or a strap, and optionally wherein the band or strap is arranged to attach to a position adjacent the mouth of the container, and further optionally wherein the band or strap is arranged to attach to a position spaced from the mouth of the container.
13. The support of claim 12 wherein the band or strap is flexible and/or has fastening means such as hook and loop fastening means or magnetic fastening means.
14. The support of any preceding claim further comprising a detachably mounted container opener arranged to facilitate separating the lid of the container from the container.
15. The support of any preceding claim wherein the fluid applicator comprises a paint brush and the container comprises a paint tin.

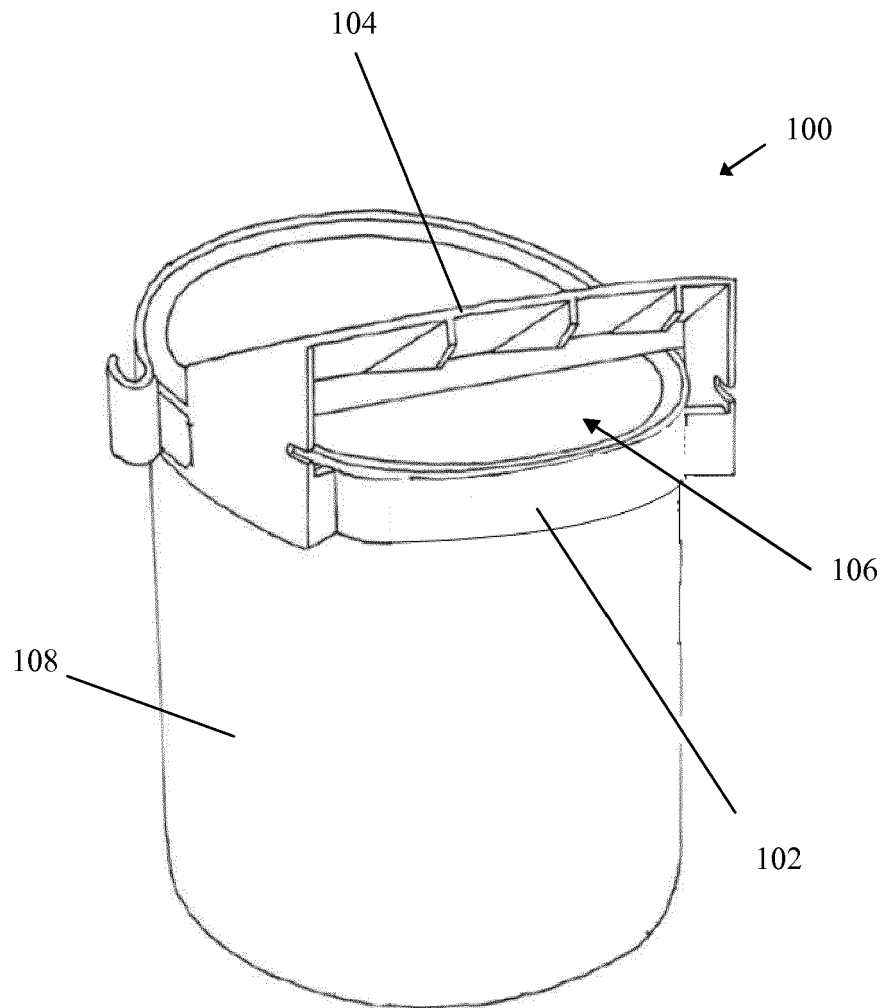


Figure 1

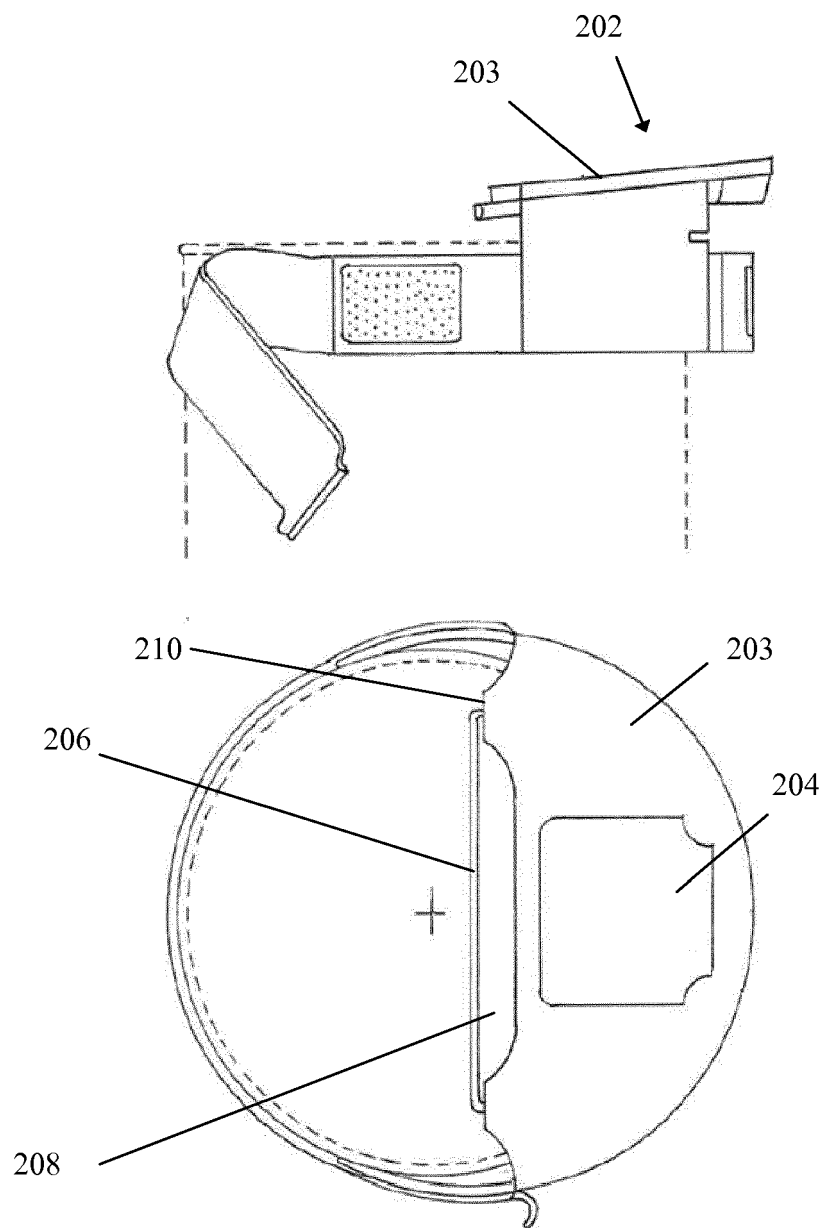


Figure 2

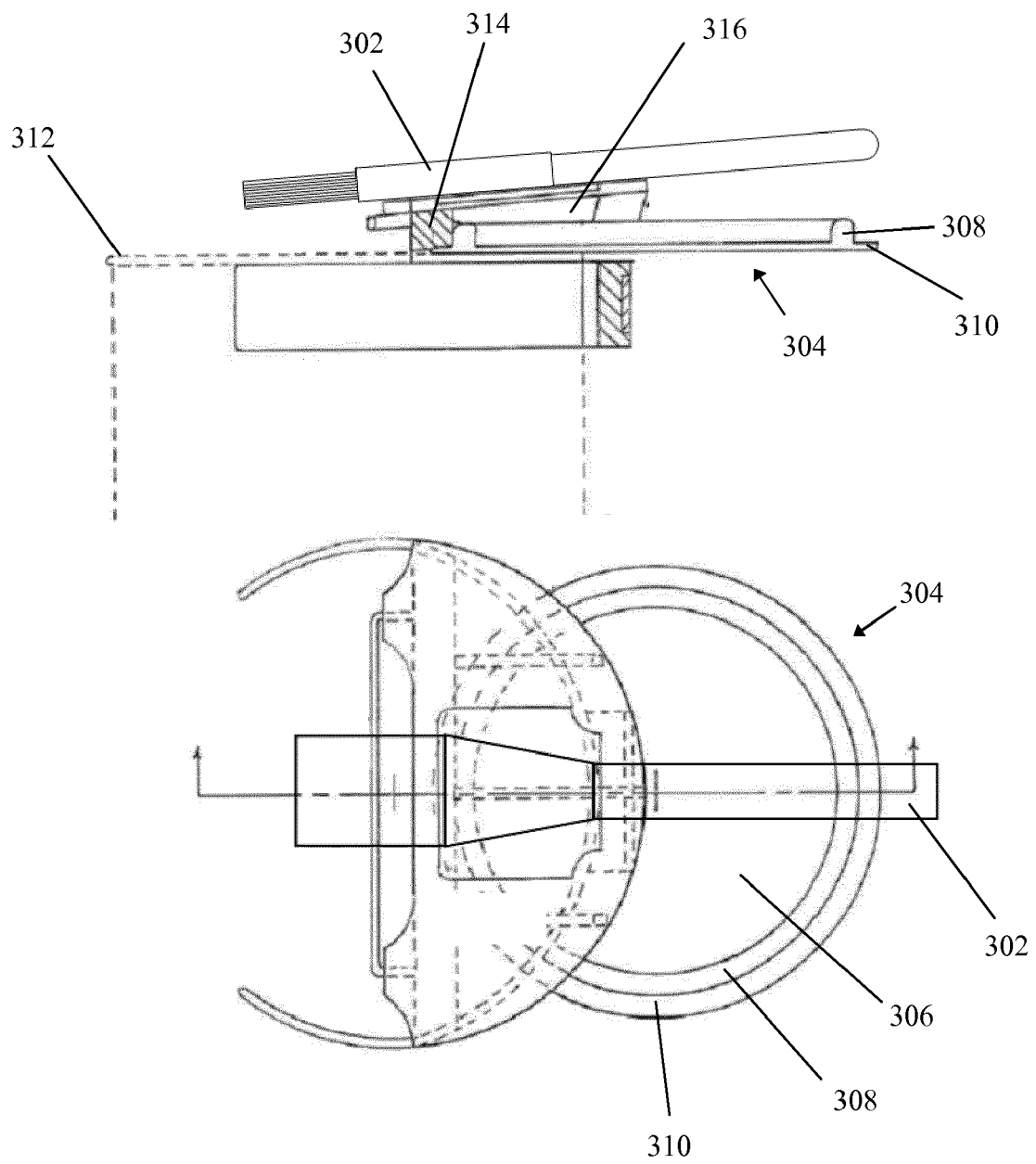


Figure 3

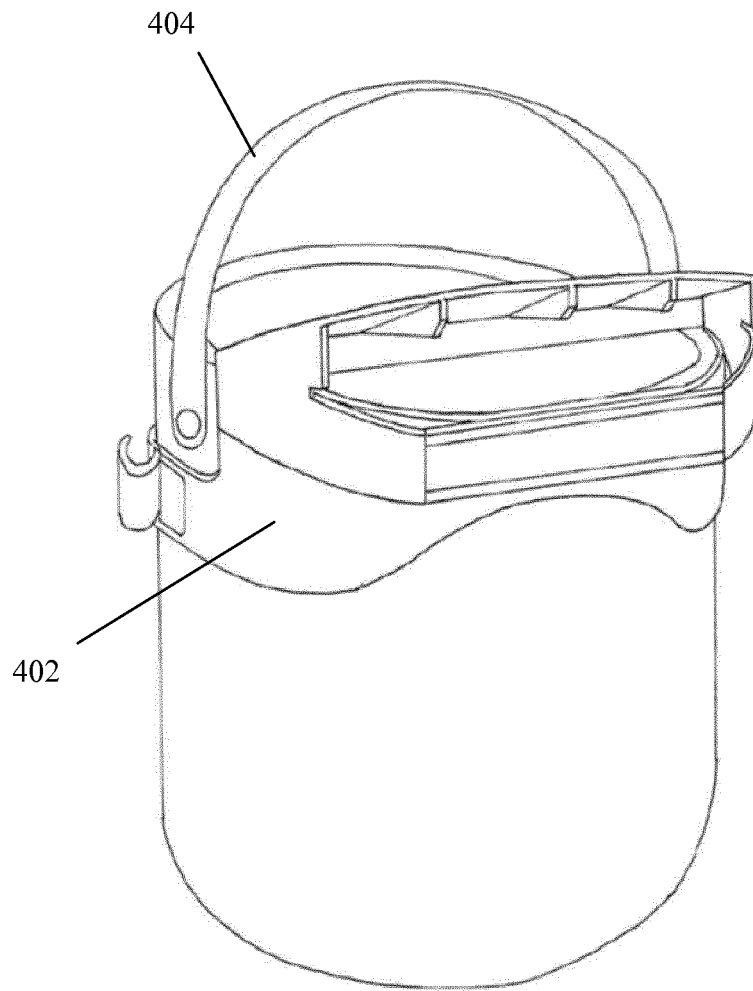


Figure 4

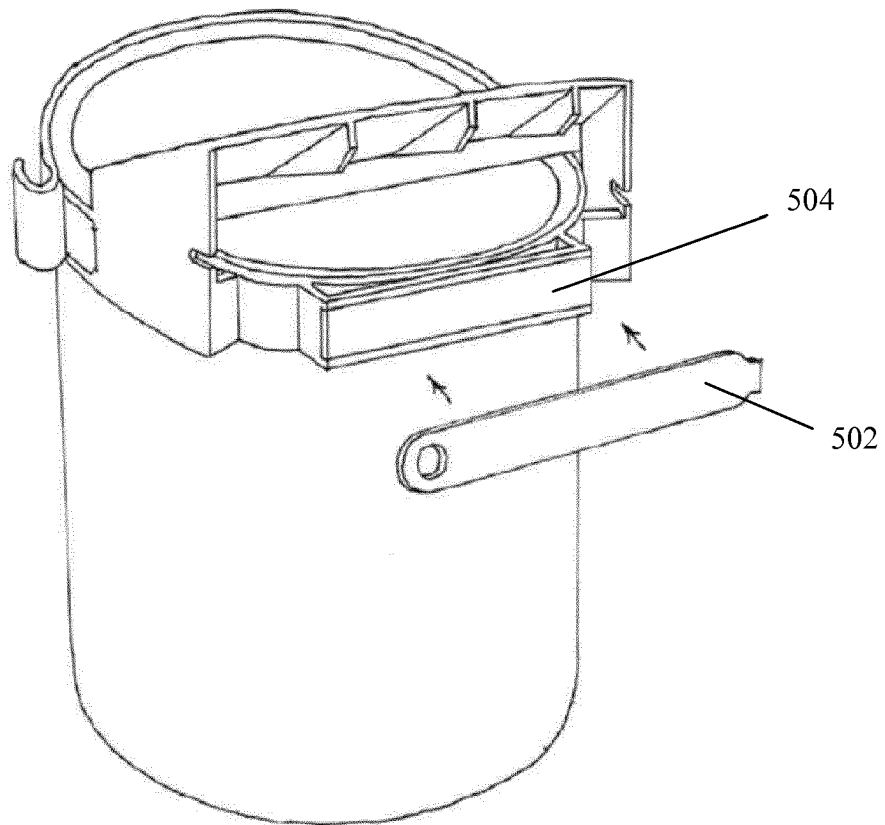


Figure 5



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 14 15 3537

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			B44D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 27 March 2014	Examiner Sartor, Michele
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS 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 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			

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27-03-2014

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82