

**PATENT COOPERATION TREATY**

From the  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

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**PCT**

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing  
(day/month/year) **22 JAN 2020**

Applicant's or agent's file reference  
WICO.001-PCT

**FOR FURTHER ACTION**  
See paragraph 2 below

International application No. PCT/US2019/063768	International filing date (day/month/year) 27 November 2019	Priority date (day/month/year) 30 November 2018
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International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC  
IPC(8) - H02G 3/08; B05B 12/20; B05B 12/26; B05B 12/28; B05B 12/32; B05B 12/36 (2019.01)  
CPC - H02G 3/081; H02G 3/088 (2019.08)

Applicant **WILLIAMSON, COREY**

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- Box No. II Priority
- Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. **FURTHER ACTION**

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 Facsimile No. 571-273-8300	Date of completion of this opinion <b>03 January 2020</b>	Authorized officer <b>Blaine R. Copenheaver</b> PCT Helpdesk: 571-272-4300 PCT OSP: 571-272-7774
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/US2019/063768

## Box No. 1 Basis of this opinion

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
- the international application in the language in which it was filed.
  - a translation of the international application into \_\_\_\_\_ which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1(b)).
2.  This opinion has been established taking into account the **rectification of an obvious mistake** authorized by or notified to this Authority under Rule 91 (Rule 43*bis*.1(a)).
3.  With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, this opinion has been established on the basis of a sequence listing:
- a.  forming part of the international application as filed:
    - in the form of an Annex C/ST.25 text file.
    - on paper or in the form of an image file.
  - b.  furnished together with the international application under PCT Rule 13*ter*.1(a) for the purposes of international search only in the form of an Annex C/ST.25 text file.
  - c.  furnished subsequent to the international filing date for the purposes of international search only:
    - in the form of an Annex C/ST.25 text file (Rule 13*ter*.1(a)).
    - on paper or in the form of an image file (Rule 13*ter*.1(b) and Administrative Instructions, Section 713).
4.  In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that forming part of the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
5. Additional comments:

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No. PCT/US2019/063768

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	1-5	YES
	Claims	None	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	None	YES
	Claims	1-5	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1-5	YES
	Claims	None	NO

2. Citations and explanations:

Claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 lack an inventive step under PCT Article 33(3) as being obvious over Wiggins in view of Skakun.

Regarding Claim 1, Wiggins discloses a universal electrical box (22; "electrical/communications box 22"; paragraph [0035]; Fig. 1; "The following specification describes a temporary protective cover/drywall guide for electrical/communications boxes apparatus"; paragraph [0033]) shield (10; "The cover/guide 10 may comprise an pop-out base 12 surrounded by and generally coplanar with a perimeter flange 14, between which is disposed a perimeter wall 16 (oriented generally orthogonally to the base and the flange). In this illustration, the cover/guide 10 is shown as rectangular in shape to accommodate a single gang box because that is the shape of most conventional electrical, communications, and plumbing boxes used in building construction"; paragraph [0034]; Figs. 1, 6, 12), comprising: a sealing flange (14; Fig. 1) including a front surface (left 14; Fig. 1) and a back surface (right 14; Fig. 1); a first pocket (top 20; "the flange 14 may define one or more bumpouts 20 to accommodate fastener heads"; paragraph [0037]; Figs. 1, 3) extending out from the front surface of the sealing flange; wherein the sealing flange and first pocket are dimensioned to go over a selected type of electrical box (22/26; "The flange 14 covers the entire perimeter edge 26 of the box (and beyond) and helps to keep dust, paint, mud, etc., away from the interior of the box"; paragraph [0041]; "the flange 14 may define one or more bumpouts 20 to accommodate fastener heads"; paragraph [0037]; Figs. 1, 3, 12).

Wiggins fails to explicitly disclose a universal electrical box shield, comprising: an adhesive layer including a first surface bonded to the sealing flange back surface and a second surface with a removably adhesive application. Skakun teaches a universal electrical box (10, 12, 18; "a first embodiment of the subject shield 16 is installed over cover plate 10. The cover plate is attached to a switch lever 18", "surface 12 of the cover plate 10"; paragraph [0016]; Fig. 2) shield (16; Fig. 2), comprising: an adhesive layer (27, 28; "Patches 27 and 28 of self-stick adhesive are applied to inner surface 29 of the deck 25 adjacent the perimeter 23 and the inner surface of the perimeter 23. The adhesive is a releasable, water-based material available from 3M Company under the trade name of Fastbond Insulation Adhesive, Number 49. The adhesive is applied in a rectangular pattern spaced between the raised portion 19 and the perimeter 23. The inner edges 30 and 31 of the patches are preferably close to junctures 32 and 33 between the raised portion 19 and deck 25 of the shield. The adhesive preferably has greater holding power to the inner surface of the deck 25 than to the outer surface 12 of the cover plate 20 so that upon removal, all of the adhesive clearly separates from the cover plate"; paragraph [0016]; Fig. 2) including a first surface (top 27/28; Fig. 2) bonded to a sealing flange (23/25; Fig. 2) back surface (29; Fig. 2) and a second surface (bottom 27/28; Fig. 2) with a removably adhesive application ("The adhesive preferably has greater holding power to the inner surface of the deck 25 than to the outer surface 12 of the cover plate 20 so that upon removal, all of the adhesive clearly separates from the cover plate"; paragraph [0016]; Fig. 2). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Wiggins with the teaching of Skakun for the purpose of increasing the bond strength between the shield and the electrical box to reduce the chances of the shield falling off the electrical box.

Regarding Claim 2, modified Wiggins discloses the apparatus of claim 1. Wiggins fails to explicitly disclose the apparatus further comprising: wherein the first pocket is double-beveled. Skakun teaches the apparatus further comprising: wherein a first pocket (17; Fig. 2) is double-beveled (19, 21; Fig. 1). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Wiggins with the teaching of Skakun for the purpose of reducing the time/effort needed to remove the shield from the electrical box by using the edges formed by a double-bevel as a grip for a users fingers.

Regarding Claim 4, modified Wiggins discloses the apparatus of claim 1, further comprising: wherein the first pocket is a rectangular cube shape (20; Figs. 1, 3).

Regarding Claim 5, modified Wiggins discloses the apparatus of claims 1, 2, 3 or 4, specifically claim 1, further comprising: a second pocket (bottom 20; Figs. 1, 3), the second pocket dimensioned to provide clearance for electrical box mounting screws ("the flange 14 may define one or more bumpouts 20 to accommodate fastener heads"; paragraph [0037]; Figs. 1, 3). Wiggins fails to explicitly disclose the apparatus further comprising: second and third pockets disposed proximate opposed ends of the first pocket, the second and third pockets dimensioned to provide clearance for electrical box mounting screws. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Wiggins for the purpose of reducing paint intrusions inside electrical boxes that have mounting screws on the sides of the electrical box and since a mere duplication of essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art.

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PCT/US2019/063768

**Supplemental Box**

In case the space in any of the preceding boxes is not sufficient.

Continuation of:

Claims 1 and 3 lack an inventive step under PCT Article 33(3) as being obvious over Sutter in view of Skakun.

Regarding Claim 1, Sutter discloses a universal electrical box (50; "junction box 50"; paragraph [0035]; Figs. 3, 13, 14) shield (10; "A first embodiment of the paint shield of the present invention is shown at 10 in FIGS. 1-5. This may be considered a universal paint shield because it can be used on standard wall switches, decor-type switches, and outlets. Shield 10 has a generally planar plate 12 which defines a front face 14, a rear face 16 and a perimeter 18. First and second blisters 20, 22 are formed in the plate at the top and bottom edges"; paragraph [0032]; Figs. 1, 2, 4, 5), comprising: a sealing flange (12; Figs. 1, 13, 14) including a front surface (14; Figs. 1, 3) and a back surface (16; Figs. 2-4); a first pocket (20; Figs. 1, 2, 5, 14) extending out from the front surface of the sealing flange; wherein the sealing flange and first pocket are dimensioned to go over a selected type of electrical box (50; Figs. 3, 13, 14).

Sutter fails to explicitly disclose a universal electrical box shield, comprising: an adhesive layer including a first surface bonded to the sealing flange back surface and a second surface with a removably adhesive application.

Skakun teaches a universal electrical box (10, 12, 18; "a first embodiment of the subject shield 16 is installed over cover plate 10.

The cover plate is attached to a switch lever 18", "surface 12 of the cover plate 10"; paragraph [0016]; Fig. 2) shield (16; Fig. 2), comprising: an adhesive layer (27, 28; "Patches 27 and 28 of self-stick adhesive are applied to inner surface 29 of the deck 25 adjacent the perimeter 23 and the inner surface of the perimeter 23. The adhesive is a releasable, water-based material available from 3M Company under the trade name of Fastbond Insulation Adhesive, Number 49. The adhesive is applied in a rectangular pattern spaced between the raised portion 19 and the perimeter 23. The inner edges 30 and 31 of the patches are preferably close to junctures 32 and 33 between the raised portion 19 and deck 25 of the shield. The adhesive preferably has greater holding power to the inner surface of the deck 25 than to the outer surface 12 of the cover plate 20 so that upon removal, all of the adhesive clearly separates from the cover plate"; paragraph [0016]; Fig. 2) including a first surface (top 27/28; Fig. 2) bonded to a sealing flange (23/25; Fig. 2) back surface (29; Fig. 2) and a second surface (bottom 27/28; Fig. 2) with a removably adhesive application ("The adhesive preferably has greater holding power to the inner surface of the deck 25 than to the outer surface 12 of the cover plate 20 so that upon removal, all of the adhesive clearly separates from the cover plate"; paragraph [0016]; Fig. 2).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Sutter with the teaching of Skakun for the purpose of increasing the bond strength between the shield and the electrical box to reduce the chances of the shield falling off the electrical box.

Regarding Claim 3, modified Sutter discloses the apparatus of claim 1, further comprising: wherein the first pocket is domed (Figs. 1, 14).

Claims 1-5 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(4), and thus have industrial applicability because the subject matter claimed can be made or used in industry.