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Joye

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(54) **SYSTEMS, APPARATUS, AND RELATED METHODS FOR WEATHER-PROOFED WIRE SPLICINGS**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
H01R 4/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC 174/87

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC 174/76, 87; 439/814, 792, 638
See application file for complete search history.

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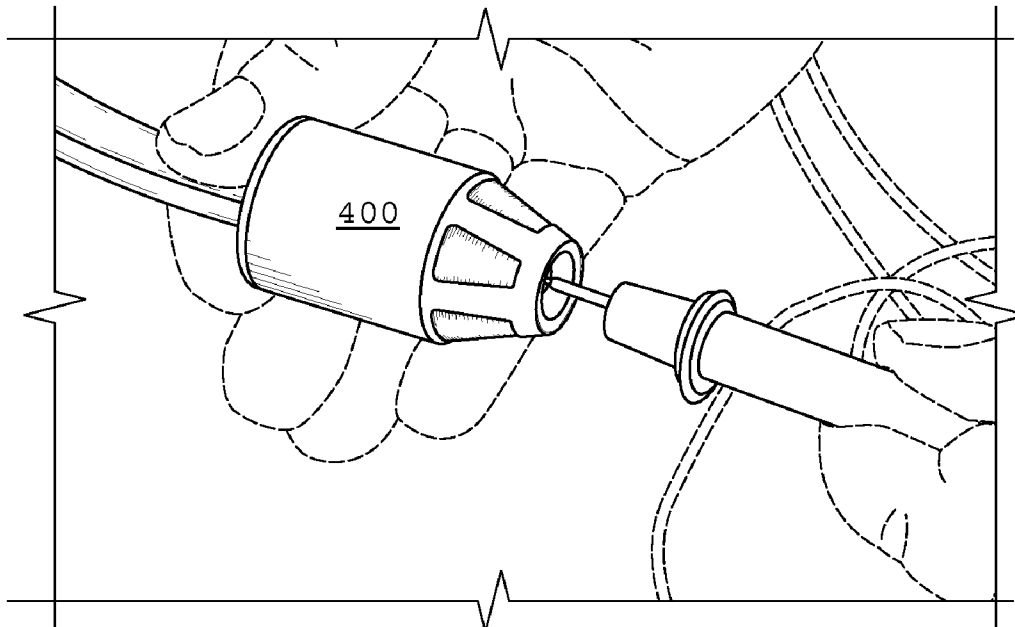
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Disclosed are systems, apparatus and related methods for making weather, fire, or water-proofed wire-to-wire electrical connections.

13 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



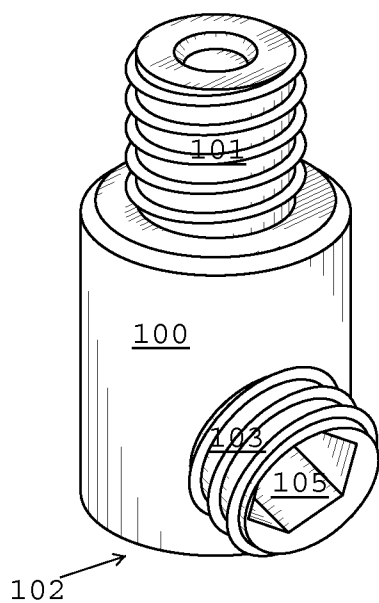


FIG. 1A

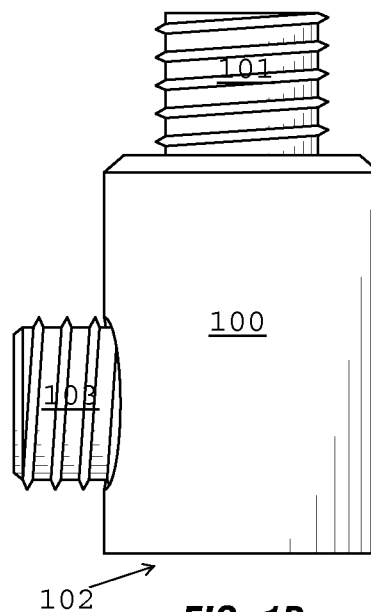


FIG. 1B

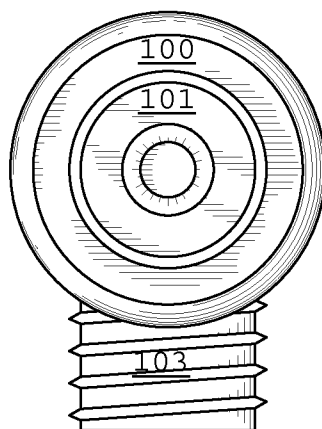


FIG. 1C

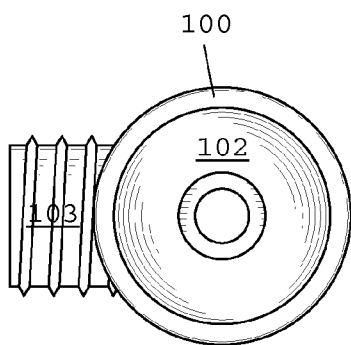


FIG. 1D

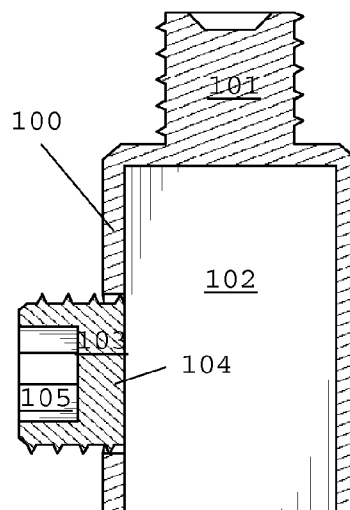


FIG. 1E

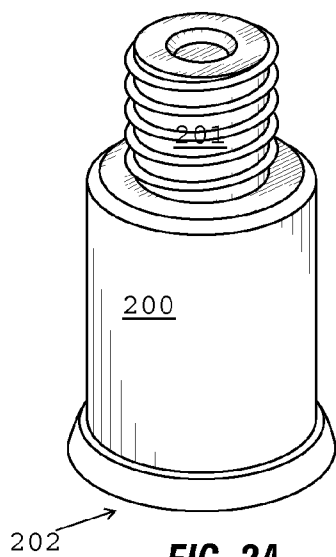


FIG. 2A

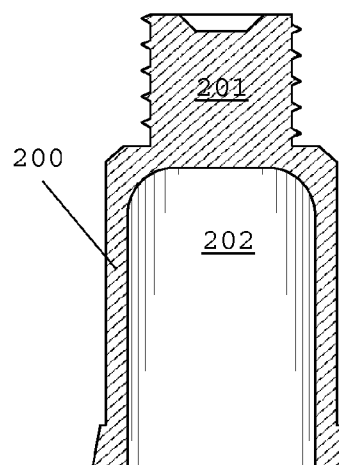


FIG. 2B

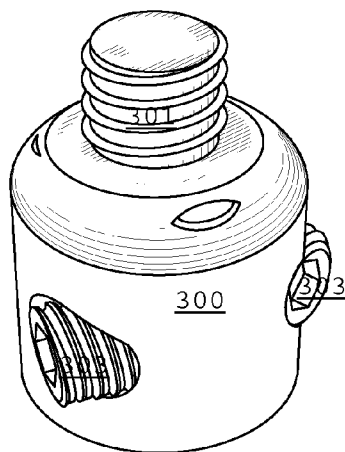


FIG. 3A

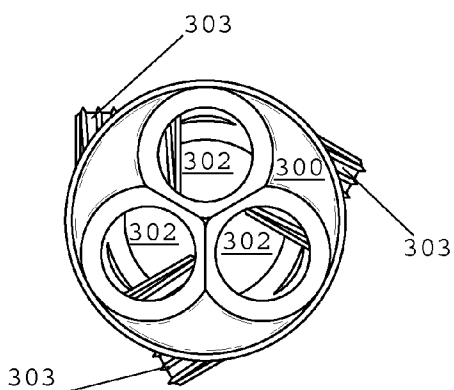


FIG. 3B

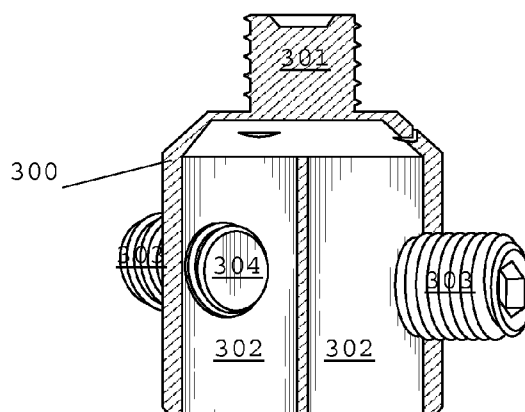


FIG. 3C

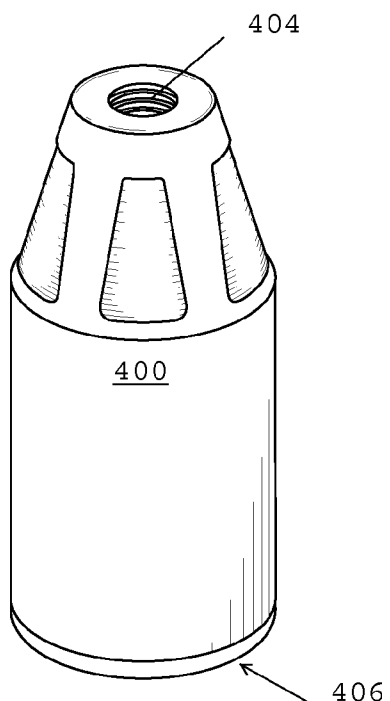


FIG. 4A

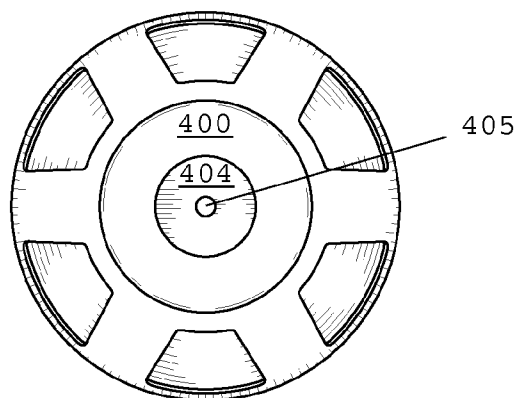


FIG. 4B

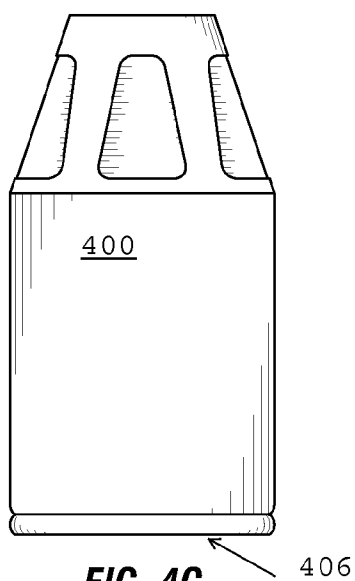


FIG. 4C

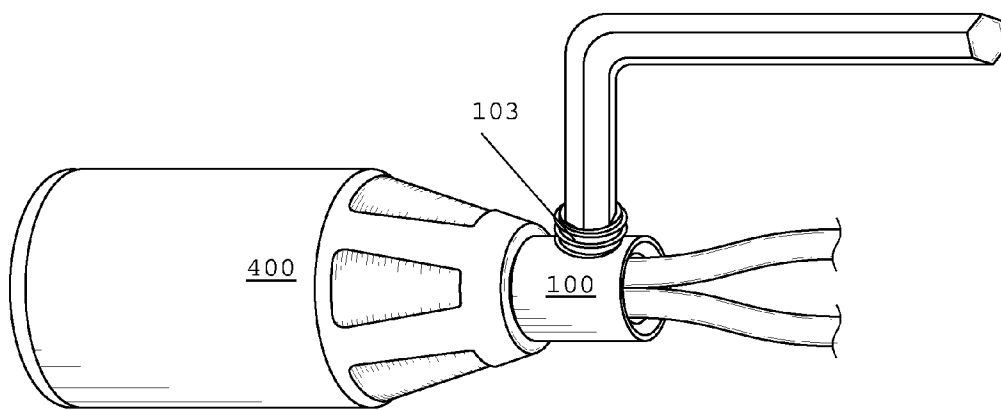
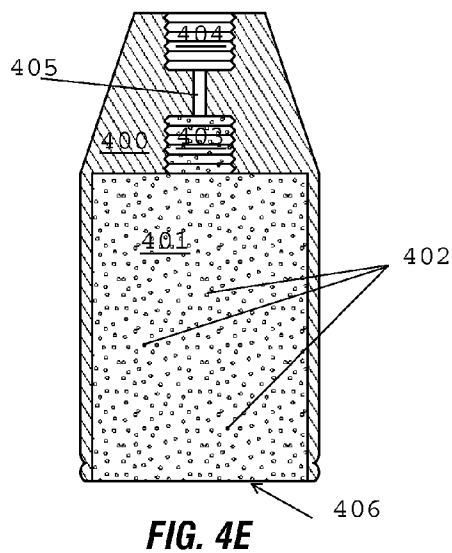
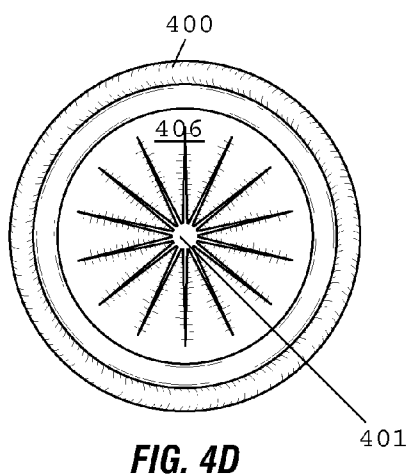


FIG. 5A

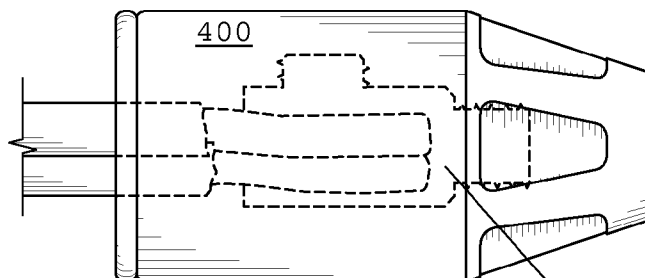


FIG. 5B

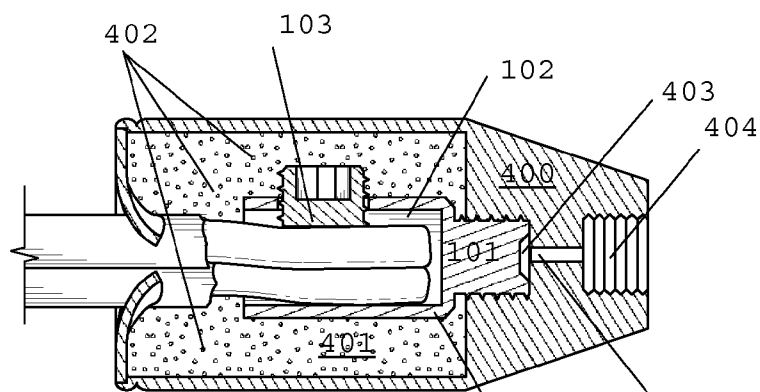


FIG. 5C

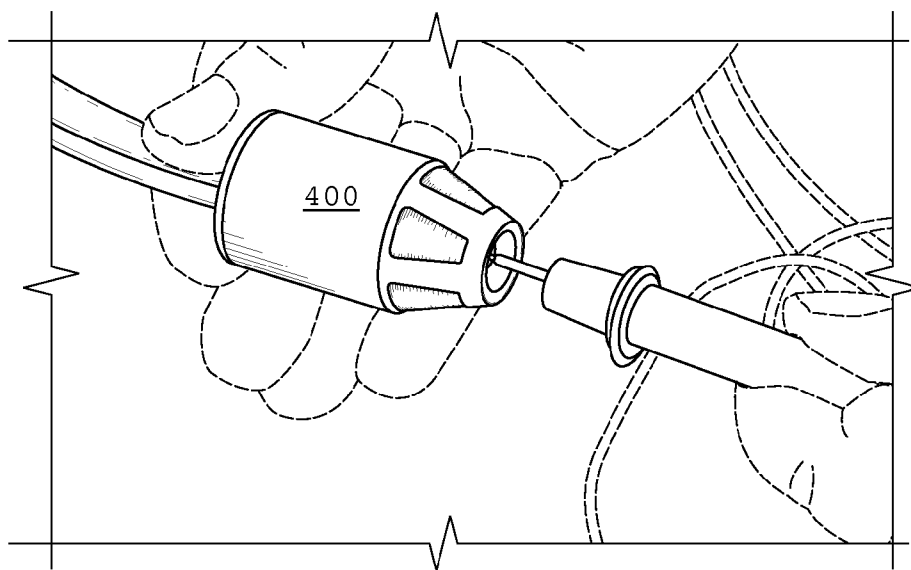


FIG. 6

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SYSTEMS, APPARATUS, AND RELATED METHODS FOR WEATHER-PROOFED WIRE SPLICINGS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit and priority of U.S. Prov. Pat. App. Ser. No. 61/371,970 (filed Aug. 9, 2010) entitled "Systems, Apparatus, and Related Methods for Weather-proofed Wire Splittings," and said application is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of Invention

The present application is in the field of systems, apparatus and related methods for making weather, fire, or water-proofed wire-to-wire electrical connections.

2. Background of the Invention

Electrical wiring infrastructures are known to have many practical applications in modern societies. Frequently, the assembly of said infrastructures requires electricity conducting ("conductive") wire-to-wire connections. Conductive connections may be accomplished via stripping the insulation off the cores of at least two wires and bringing the exposed cores into contact. Without more, the contacted cores are susceptible to unintended disconnection and pose the risk of shock or spark (i.e., fire) when the connection is live. Furthermore, if the live wire-to-wire connection is exposed to water or weather, then the risk of electric shock increases and, additionally, the connected wire cores can be corroded. Accordingly, there is a need for systems, apparatus, and related methods for accomplishing secure (i.e., not easily disconnected), electricity insulated ("insulative"), spark resistant, and water/weather-proofed wire-to-wire connections.

Various apparatus and systems have been devised in view of satisfying the above-identified need. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,113,037 (issued May 12, 1992) of King et al. and its patent family (hereinafter "the King patents") disclose various embodiments of an apparatus which generally comprise a sealant (e.g., silicon grease or petroleum jelly) filled cap internally featuring tapering female screw-threads. In the King patents, the tapering screw-threads are for gripping and compressing contacted wire-cores; water-proofing and spark resistance is accomplished via the sealant surrounding the contacted wire-cores; and the cap structure insulates the connection. Nevertheless, the King patents have not adequately addressed the above-identified need. One inadequacy, among others, may be that the apparatus disclosed by the King patents does not adequately secure wire-to-wire connections due to the sealant's lubricant properties which counter the gripping function of the tapering female screw threads (i.e., the wire-to-wire connection within the apparatus is susceptible to disassociation from the cap). Therefore, wire connections made according to the King patents remain susceptible to unintended disconnection, shock, spark or wire damage.

Furthermore, apparatus disclosed by the King patents introduce unnecessary limitations into the process of coupling/splicing wires. Continuing the example from above, the King patents' apparatus are limited since: (1) the apparatus

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and wires are typically small and hard to grip; and (2) the wire-cores must be contacted and aligned throughout the twisting and compression thereof by the tapering female threads. The size and accuracy requirements of the King apparatus necessitate the steadied and practiced hand of a skilled artisan rather than a "do-it-yourself" layman. Furthermore, once the King apparatus has been installed, there is no way to either assure that an electrical connection has been established or to check voltages across the connection, unless the apparatus is removed to reveal sealant covered wire-cores. Removal of the apparatus is messy (i.e., sealant covered), requires re-installation of the apparatus, and is otherwise undesirable. Thus, there remains a need for systems, apparatus, and related methods for accomplishing secure, insulated, spark resistant, and water/weather-proofed wire-to-wire connections that may be practiced by laymen and wherein voltages may be readily measured across the associated wire connections.

Other known apparatus have also been devised to address the above-identified needs, yet these known apparatus have also inadequately addressed said needs or have introduced unnecessary limitations to the wire-coupling process. One type of known, yet inadequate, apparatus features a component (whether conductive or not) that is mechanically anchored to contacted wire-cores and interlockingly coupled to a sealant filled cap. Although these interlocked components provide secure, insulated, and water-proofed wire connections, they also feature limitations, including but not limited to: being hard to grip due to size and accuracy requirements; being hard to assemble; and not providing an easy means for measuring voltage across the connection without disassembly. See e.g., U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,051,791 (issued Apr. 18, 2000), 4,039,742 (issued Aug. 2, 1977), 3,483,310 (issued Dec. 9, 1969), and 2,870,239 (issued Jan. 20, 1959). Another type of known apparatus features a conductive component that is mechanically anchored to a wire-to-wire connection prior to being sheathed with a heat shrink plastic (with or without a sealant filled cap). While said sheathed apparatus provide secure, insulated, and water-proofed wire connections, they too feature limitations, including but not limited to: being hard to grip due to size and accuracy requirements; being hard to assemble; requiring additional tools (e.g., pliers or a blow-torch) that may not be readily available or usable by laymen; and not providing an easy means for measuring voltage across the connection without disassembly. See e.g., Part. No. 270LVC1 sold by Paige Electric (www.paigewire.com). Thus, there remains a need for systems, apparatus, and related methods for accomplishing secure, insulated, spark resistant, and water/weather-proofed wire-to-wire connections that may be practiced by laymen and wherein voltages may be readily measured across the associated wire connections without disassembly.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present application to disclose systems, apparatus, and related methods for accomplishing secure, insulated, spark resistant, and water/weather-proofed wire-to-wire connections that may be practiced by laymen and wherein voltages may be readily measured across the associated wire connections without disassembly. In one preferable embodiment, the disclosed system may suitably feature: a conductive connector for electrically coupling or splicing any number of wires; and, a sealant filled (e.g., partially sealant filled) cap. Operably, the cap may: first, function as a handle for gripping the connector while the connector is conductively anchored to at least one wire-core; and, second, func-

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tion as an insulator which securely retains the connector and coupled wires within the moisture inhibiting sealant. An aperture may be strategically disposed through the cap so that an electrical measuring device (e.g., a volt meter, and ammeter, an ohmmeter, electrometer or the like) may be contacted to a retained connector without compromising the insulative, spark resistant, and weatherproof/waterproof properties of the cap.

It is yet another object of the present application to meet the aforementioned needs without any of the drawbacks associated with apparatus heretofore known for the same purpose. It is yet still a further objective to meet these needs in an efficient and inexpensive manner.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

The manner in which these objectives and other desirable characteristics can be obtained is better explained in the following description and attached figures in which:

FIG. 1A is a perspective view of a preferable embodiment of a conductive and male headed connector.

FIG. 1B is a side view of the connector of FIG. 1A.

FIG. 1C is a top view of the connector of FIG. 1A.

FIG. 1D is a bottom view of the connector of FIG. 1A.

FIG. 1E is a longitudinal cross-section of the connector of FIG. 1A.

FIG. 2A is a perspective view of an alternate yet still preferable embodiment of a conductive male headed connector.

FIG. 2B is a longitudinal cross-section of the connector of FIG. 2A.

FIG. 3A is a perspective view of another alternate yet still preferable embodiment of a conductive male headed connector.

FIG. 3B is a bottom view of the connector of FIG. 3A.

FIG. 3C is a longitudinal cross section of FIG. 3A.

FIG. 4A is a perspective view of a preferable embodiment for a cap.

FIG. 4B is a top view of the cap of FIG. 4A.

FIG. 4C is a side view of the cap of FIG. 4A.

FIG. 4D is a bottom view of the cap of FIG. 4A.

FIG. 4E is a longitudinal cross-section of the cap of FIG. 4A.

FIG. 5A is a contextual view of the cap of FIG. 4A and connector of FIG. 1A.

FIG. 5B is another contextual view of the cap of FIG. 4A and the connector of FIG. 1A.

FIG. 5C is a cross section of the cap of FIG. 4A and connector of FIG. 1A as such are contextually depicted in FIG. 5B.

FIG. 6 is yet another contextual view of the cap of FIG. 4A and connector of FIG. 1A.

It is to be noted, however, that the appended figures illustrate only typical embodiments disclosed in this application, and therefore, are not to be considered limiting of its scope, for the invention may admit to other equally effective embodiments that will be appreciated by those reasonably skilled in the relevant arts. Also, figures are not necessarily made to scale.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In general, the disclosed system may suitably feature: a conductive connector for electrically coupling/splicing any number of wires; and, a sealant filled (e.g., partially sealant filled) cap. Operably, the cap may: first, function as a handle

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for gripping the connector while the connector is conductively anchored to at least one wire-core; and, second, function as an insulator which securely retains the connector and coupled wires within the moisture inhibiting sealant. An aperture may be strategically disposed through the cap so that an electrical measuring device may be contacted to a retained connector without compromising the insulative, spark resistant, and weatherproof/waterproof properties of the cap.

FIG. 1A is a perspective view of a preferable embodiment of an electricity conducting (“conductive”) connector **100**. As seen in the figure, the connector **100** suitably features a head **101**, a wire-receptacle **102**, and a set screw **103**. FIGS. 1B through 1D respectively depict a side, the top, and the bottom views of the connector **100** depicted in FIG. 1A. FIG. 1E depicts a longitudinal cross-section of the connector **100** of FIGS. 1A through 1D. Taken together, FIGS. 1A through 1E suitably illustrate the above referenced components of the depicted connector **100**.

The head **101** is best illustrated in FIGS. 1A, 1B, and 1C. Referring to these figures, the head **101** is an input for the secured placement of the connector **100** at a cooperating socket. As discussed in greater detail below, the head **101** and a cooperating socket may suitably be the primary mechanism for removably securing the connector **100** to an object (see, e.g. FIGS. 5A through 5C wherein the connector **100** is removable secured to a cap **400** via cooperating head **101** and sockets **403**, **404**). In a preferred embodiment, the head **101** may be threaded in the manner of a male-screw or bolt. Manners of threading the screw-head **101** will be well known to those of skill in the art and include, but are not limited to thread cutting (e.g., threading via taps and dies, single-point threading, or thread milling including form-milling and thrilling) and thread forming and rolling, thread casting or molding, thread grinding, and thread lapping. Although depicted with male threads, the head **101** may feature any mechanism for removable, yet secure, input to a socket. Such mechanisms are known or apparent to those of skill in the art and may include, without limitation: snap fasteners; restriction fittings; and the like.

The wire receptacle **102** and set screw **103** are best seen in FIGS. 1A, 1D, and 1E. Referring to these figures, the wire receptacle **102** defines a cavity within the connector **100** that is configured to receive the stripped core of at least one, but preferably two or more, wires. Referring specifically to FIG. 1E, the set-screw **103** features a point **104** and a head **105** and is threadedly disposed through a side of the connector **100** so that the point **104** is within the cavity **102** while the head **105** may be accessible outside of the connector **100**. Operably, the wire-receptacle **102** may suitably receive any number of stripped wire cores so that: (1) the point **104** of the set-screw **103** may be driven in the manner (i.e., drive style) of a screw through the connector **100** side into compressive or clamping contact with the stripped wire cores, wherein the wire cores electrically contact each other and/or the connector **100**; and (2) so that the wires’ relative motion with respect to the connector **100** is prevented or otherwise restricted (i.e., the wires are not easily disengaged from each other and/or the wire-receptacle **102**). The geometry of the set point **104** may vary and acceptable geometries will be well known to one of skill in the art. Such known geometries may include, but should not be limited to: Flat Point; Domed Point; Cone Point; Cup Point; Knurled Cup Point; Extended Point (Pilot Point, Dog Point); and the like. The geometry of the set screw head **105** may be blind and may also vary according to available or preferable drive styles which will be known to those of skill in the art. Said geometries and drive-styles may include,

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but should not be limited to: Hex, Allen, slot, Torx, star, Phillips, Bristol Spline, and the like.

Preferably, the connector **100** and its components are constructed of electricity conducting materials so that stripped wire cores installed within the wire-receptacle **102** may be electrically coupled via contact with the connector **100** in lieu of, or in addition to, core-to-core contact. Metals are preferable materials for constructing the connector **100** since metals are typically conductive and susceptible to machining, molding, and being cut or manipulated. Silver, Gold, Copper, Aluminum, and Brass are the most preferable metals for constructing the connector **100**. Yet still, other conductive materials known to one of skill in the art are also preferable for constructing the connector **100**, and may include without limitation graphite and other non-metallic electrical conductors.

FIGS. **2A** and **2B** respectively illustrate perspective and cross-section views of an alternate embodiment of a connector **200**. As with the connector **100** depicted in the earlier figures, the connector **200** of FIGS. **2A** and **2B** features a head **201** and a wire-receptacle **102**. As with the earlier embodiment, the head **201** defines an input for a cooperating socket and may be a male-threaded screw or bolt. The wire-receptacle **202** defines a cavity within the connector **200** that is configured to receive the stripped core of at least one, but preferably two or more, wires. However, unlike the earlier embodiments, the connector **200** of FIGS. **2A** and **2B** does not feature a set screw for retaining electrically coupled wire cores within the connector **200**. Instead, the connector **200** is preferably constructed of electrically conductive and malleable material whereby the body of the connector **200** may be crimped around the installed wire-cores. Examples of suitable manners of crimping are disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,870,239 (issued Jun. 10, 1959) and 3,483,310 (issued Dec. 9, 1969) but other modes or crimp styles will be known or readily apparent to one of skill in the art. It should be noted, however, that regardless of the crimp style employed for retaining and electrically coupling stripped wire cores within the wire-receptacle, the resultant deformation of the connector **200** body should preferably not affect the operability of the head **201**. As with the earlier embodiment, metals including silver, gold, copper, aluminum, and brass, may be used to construct the connector **200** with the walls of the connector **200** preferably being made thin so that the connector **200** is malleable and crimping is possible. In all other respects the connector **200** may be constructed and operated in the manner of the connector **100** disclosed in FIGS. **1A** through **1E**.

FIGS. **3A**, **3B**, and **3C** respectively illustrate perspective, bottom, and cross-section views of another alternate yet preferable embodiment of a conductive connector **300**. As with the other connectors **100**, **200** disclosed above, the connector **300** features a head **301**. Unlike the earlier embodiments, the connector **300** suitably features one or more wire-receptacle **302** so that sets of stripped wire cores may be electrically coupled within each wire-receptacle **302** or so that multiple large-gauge wires may be electrically coupled via the connector **300** (e.g., one stripped core installed per receptacle **302**). In all other respects the connector **300** operates in the manner of the connector **100**, **200** disclosed in the earlier figures. It should also be noted that, even though FIGS. **3A** through **3C** depicted the connector **300** with set screws for securing and electrically coupling the wires to each other and/or the connector **300**, the connector **300** may also be constructed so that a crimping connection could be made as disclosed in connection with FIGS. **2A** and **2B**.

Although the connectors **100**, **200**, **300** are depicted with various means and mechanisms (e.g., set screw and crimp) for

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retaining stripped wires within the wire-receptacles **102**, **202**, **302**, other means and mechanisms for retaining stripped wire cores within the wire receptacle will be known or apparent to one of skill in the art and may include without limitation female-threaded wire-receptacles (see e.g., U.S. Pat. No. 5,113,037 (issued May 12, 1992), soldering, tying (see e.g., U.S. Pat. No. 6,051,791 (issued Apr. 18, 2000)), twisting, wedging (see e.g., U.S. Pat. No. 6,051,791, FIG. 2) and the like. Said known or apparent wire-retaining means and mechanisms, including others, may be employed without departing from the spirit and intent of this application. In addition, although depicted with a general cylindrical shape, a connector **100**, **200**, **300**, may be of any shape or cross section, as long as it features a head and a wire receptacle.

FIG. **4A** is a perspective view of a preferable embodiment of an electricity insulating (“insulative”) cap **400**. As seen in the figure, the cap **400** is generally cylindrical in shape with one side tapering to a point occupied by an external socket **404**. FIGS. **4B** through **4D** respectively depict the top, a side, and the bottom views of the cap **400** depicted in FIG. **4A**. FIG. **4E** depicts a longitudinal cross-section of the cap **400** of FIGS. **4A** through **4D**. As seen in its cross-section, the cap **400** is hollow and internally features a sealant receptacle **401**, an internal socket **403**, closure **406**, and a probe-port **405**. Taken together, FIGS. **1A** through **1E** suitably illustrate the above referenced components of the depicted cap **400**.

The sealant receptacle **401** is best depicted by FIG. **4E**. As seen in the figure, the sealant receptacle **401** generally defines the hollow of the cap **400**. Operably, the sealant receptacle **401** is adapted to receive and retain a viscous sealant **402** with moisture inhibiting properties. Viscous sealants are known or will be apparent to those of skill in the art and may include, without being limited to: a silicone based material or the like, including silicone grease; potting compound; greases; adhesives, mastics, gels, or any other waterproofing and/or fire retardant compounds. The sealant **402** is preferably viscous so that it remains within the sealant receptacle **401** of the cap **400** during periods of cap **400** storage or use due to its inherent non-flowability. Preferable sealants can include Silicone Grease, Petroleum Jelly, or Amorphous Calcium Carbonate. Sealant may be provided to the sealant receptacle at any time.

The inner socket **403** is best depicted in FIG. **4E**. As seen in the figure, the inner socket is within the cap **400** and integral with the sealant receptacle **401**. Preferably, the internal socket **403** defines a means for removably, yet securely, retaining an input (see, e.g. FIGS. **5B** and **5C** wherein the internal socket receives the head **101** of a connector **100** as an input). The socket **403** is depicted in FIG. **4E** with female-threads for cooperating with the male threads of an input so that the input is securely and removably retained by the socket **403**. Although depicted with female threads, the inner socket **403** may feature any mechanism for removably, yet securely, retaining an input. Such mechanisms are known or apparent to those of skill in the art and may include without limitation, snap fasteners, restriction fittings, and the like.

The outer socket **404** is best depicted in FIGS. **4A**, **4B**, and **4E**. As seen in the figures, the socket **404** is suitably disposed externally and opposite to the inner socket **403**. The inner **403** and outer **404** sockets are preferably adapted to retain the same inputs, the only difference between the sockets suitably being their position on the cap **400**. Although depicted with female threads, the external socket **404** may feature any mechanism for removably, yet securely, retaining an input. Such mechanisms are known or apparent to those of skill in the art and may include without limitation, snap fasteners, restriction fittings, and the like.

The probe-port **405** is best depicted in FIGS. **4B** and **4E**. As illustrated by the recited figures, the probe-port **405** is preferably a hole through the cap **400** wall for access to the sealant receptacle **401** and for suitably allowing probes to interact with items retained within the cap. For reasons discussed in greater detail below, the probe-port is preferably positioned in the cap **400** so that a probe inserted therethrough enters the sealant receptacle **401** at the inner socket **403**.

The closure **406** is best seen in FIGS. **4C** and **4E**. The cap closure **406** is preferably a means for elective closing of the sealant receptacle **401**. As shown in FIGS. **4C** and **4E**, the closure **406** occupies the open end of the cap **400** and is preferably defined by a plurality of triangular segments which converge at their points and which suitably yield or flex away from said convergence in response to a normal force. Suitably, when the segments converge, the closure **406** closes the cap **400** (more specifically, the sealant receptacle **401** of the cap **400**). However, when the segments flex or yield, the cap **400** is open so that items may be deposited therein the cap's sealant receptacle **401**. Notably, items such as wire couplings/splicings may be deposited into the cap **400** through the closure **406** while the wire remnants extended through the closure **406** since the segments suitably flex around, and conform to, said wire remnants (see, e.g., FIG. **5C**). Additionally, the closure **406** may check the flow of sealant **402** retained within the sealant receptacle **401** to inhibit its leakage therefrom. Other features and preferable aspects of such a closure are known and disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,113,037 (issued May 12, 1992) and 6,051,791 (issued Apr. 18, 2000). It should be noted that other suitable cap closures are known or will be apparent to one of skill in the art.

Preferably the cap **400** defines an electrical insulator (i.e., electrically-non-conductive) because, as discussed in greater detail below, the connection of coupled or spliced electrical wires may be retained therein without passing electricity through the cap structure (except, suitably, through any said coupled or spliced wires). Suitable materials for constructing the cap **400** may, therefore, be glass, porcelain, Teflon, composite polymers, rubber-like polymers, wood, and other like insulative materials. A preferable material for cap construction is Nylon or polypropylene. A preferable material for the closure **406** is rubber and rubber-like polymers. Depending on the material, the cap **400** body may be constructed, molded, or machined as multiple pieces or a single piece. In one embodiment the cap **400** body and the closure **406** are molded/machined/constructed separately, and the closure **406** installed on the cap in the manner of U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,113,037 (issued May 12, 1992) and 6,051,791 (issued Apr. 18, 2000) or any other known manner.

In general, a system comprising a cap **400** and a connector **100**, **200**, or **300** may suitably be used for spark resisting, weather proofing, and/or water-proofing at least one wire-splice or electrical wire coupling. First, a conductor **100**, **200**, **300** may be handled via inputting its head **101**, **201**, **301** into the external socket **404** of a cap **400**. In a preferable embodiment, the head **101**, **201**, **301** is screwed into the socket **404** via the cooperation of male and female threads. Second, the stripped cores of any number of wires may be secured to within the wire-receptacle **102**, **202**, **302** of a connector **100**, **200**, **300** (via set screw **103**, **303**, or crimping) so that the wires are electrically coupled by contact with each other and/or the connector **100**, **200**, **300**. Third, the connector **100**, **200**, **300**, including any retained wire-cores, may be passed into the cap **400** through the closure **406**. Finally the connector **100**, **200**, **300** may be deposited into the cap **400**, wherein the head **101**, **201**, **301** inputs to the inner socket **403** to removably, yet securely, retain the connector **100**, **200**, **300**

within the sealant receptacle **401**. Suitably, the sealant receptacle **401** features an amount of sealant **402** so that the connector **100**, **200**, **300** and coupled wires are preferably surrounded by the sealant **400** whereby moisture is inhibited from reaching the electrical connection(s) (i.e., the wire coupling(s) within the cap **400**). The more specific aspects of this system and related methods are best disclosed in reference to FIGS. **5A** through **5C**.

FIG. **5A** is a contextual view of the initial steps in a preferable wire splicing/coupling procedure contemplated by the disclosed system. As alluded to above, the connector **100** may be used to electrically couple wires by anchoring stripped wire cores to within the wire-receptacle **102** via pressure from the set-screw **103**. To assist a user in, among other things, (1) gripping the connector **100**, (2) directing the connector **100** to coupling contact with stripped wire cores, and (3) practicing the crimp or drive-style of the connector **100**, **200**, **300**, the cap **400** may removably receive the head **101** of the connector **100** in its external socket **404** so that the cap **400** functions as a handle to the connector **100**. Such cap **400** operability is particularly useful when the wires and connector **100** are tiny relative to a human hand because less skill (hand-coordination) is required to install the connector **100**, when featuring a handle, since the connector **100** is easier to grip, guide, and manipulate. Notably, the drive style required for depressing the set screw **103** into contact with wire cores provided to the wire receptacle **102** is preferably more easily implemented whenever the cap **400** is used as a handle for gripping the connector **100**. In the depicted embodiment, the connector **100** is received at the socket **404** via rotatable cooperation of the male threads of the head **100** and the female threads of the socket **401**. After a wire splice/coupling is made, the connector **100** may be disengaged from the socket **404** of the cap **400**.

FIGS. **5B** and **5C** illustrate the insulating, spark resistance, and waterproofing mechanisms of the cap **400**. More specifically, said figures are respectively a side view and cross-section of a wire-splicing connector **100** being water-proofingly retained within the cap **400**. Wires that are electrically coupled via a connector **100** may be passed through the closure **406** of the cap **400** (which cap **400**, in the preferred embodiment, was formerly employed as a handle for wire installation as disclosed above) so that the wire coupling may be surrounded by a sealant **402** contained within the sealant receptacle **401** of the cap **400**. As mentioned above, sealant surrounding the coupling suitably prevents or inhibits moisture from contacting the coupling. Also mentioned above, the structure of the cap is comprised of material that does not readily conduct electricity whereby the cap insulates the electrical connection of the wires.

While within the sealant receptacle **401**, the wire coupling may be removably, yet securely retained therein via inputting the head **101** into the internal socket **403**.

FIGS. **5C** and **6** illustrates the manner by which a wire-to-wire connection employing the disclosed system may be accessed by an electrical measuring device without disassembling the system or compromising its insulative, spark resistance, and water/weather proofing properties. As seen in the figures, the probe of an electrical measuring device may be guided through the aperture **405** into conductive contact with the head **101** of the connector **100**. The connector **100**, being composed of conductive material, can electrically communicate to the contacted probe whereby the electrical properties of the connection can be ascertained at any point in the lifetime of the connection without removing the connector **100** from the cap **400**.

It should be noted that FIGS. **1** through **7** and the associated description are of illustrative importance only. In other words,

the depiction and descriptions of the present invention should not be construed as limiting of the subject matter in this application. For example, the system may be designed with dimension for coupling/splicing wires of any guage or electrical capacity without departing from the spirit and intent of this disclosure. For another example, the male and female characteristics of the connector heads and cap sockets may be swapped whereby the connector features a socket while the cap features internal and external heads. Additional modifications may become apparent to one skilled in the art after reading this disclosure.

In summary, what is disclosed may be a connector with a head and wire receptacle. What is further disclosed may be a sealant-filled cap with internal and external sockets for receiving the head of a connector. What is also further disclosed may be system for coupling wires comprising (1) a connector with a head and wire receptacle, and (2) a sealant-filled cap with an internal and external socket for receiving the head of said connector. Yet still, what may be disclosed is a method of coupling wires comprising the steps of (1) securing the head of a connector with a sealant-filled cap so that the cap functions as as a handle for the connector, (2) anchoring the wires to said connector, (3) unsecuring the connector plus wires from the cap, (4) depositing the connector plus wires into the cap so that the connector plus wires is surrounded by the sealant. Also disclosed may be a method for placing sealant around a wire connection comprising the steps of (1) securing the head of a connector with sealant filled cap so that the cap functions as as a handle for the connector, (2) anchoring the wires to said connector, (3) unsecuring the connector plus wires from the cap, (4) depositing the connector plus wires into the cap so that the connector plus wires is surrounded by the sealant. Other things may be disclosed which are not specifically summarized above.

I claim:

- 1. A cap comprising:
 - a hollow body;
 - a first socket, located on the inside of the hollow body;
 - a second socket, located on the outside of the hollow body;
 - wherein said sockets are configured to receive and releasably retain a head of connector for splicing two wires, said connector further comprising a wire receptacle configured to receive and retain at least a portion of two or more wire cores so that the wire cores are electrically contacted;
 - wherein the body is configured to electrically insulate-the-connector when the head of the connector is received and releasably retained by the first socket; and,
 - wherein the body is configured to be a handle for the connector when the head of the connector is received and releasably retained in the second socket, whereby said portions of said wire cores may be provided to said wire receptacle.

- 2. The cap of claim 1 wherein said connector features more than one wire receptacle.
- 3. The cap of claim 2 wherein said connector features a means for anchoring a wire within said wire receptacle(s).
- 4. The cap of claim 3 wherein said means is at least one set screw.
- 5. The cap of claim 3 wherein said means is a configuration of the wire receptacle that is amenable to crimping.
- 6. The cap of claim 1 wherein the inside of the hollow body is filled with sealant.
- 7. The cap of claim 6 wherein the connector is electrically conductive and wherein the cap further comprising a probe-port so that the electrical conductivity of the connector may be tested while received and releasably retained by the first socket.
- 8. The cap of claim 7 wherein the probe-port defines throughway between the first and second sockets.
- 9. The cap of claim 1 wherein the hollow body features an open end so that the connector may be deposited within the hollow body.
- 10. The cap of claim 9 wherein the open end of the hollow body features a closure.
- 11. A method of coupling wires comprising the steps of:
 - obtaining a connector featuring a head and at least one wire receptacle;
 - obtaining a cap featuring a hollow body with an internal socket and an external socket, wherein said sockets are configured to receive the head of the connector;
 - securing the head of the connector to the external socket of the cap so that the cap functions as a handle for the connector;
 - anchoring at least one wire-core to within said wire receptacle(s);
 - unsecuring the head from the external socket;
 - depositing the connector plus wires core(s) into the hollow body;
 - securing the head of the connector to the internal socket of the cap so that the connector plus wire core(s) is retained within the cap.
- 12. The method of claim 11 further comprising the steps of:
 - filling the hollow body with a sealant; and,
 - wherein the step of securing the head of the connector to the internal socket results in the sealant being in contact with at least a portion of the connector.
- 13. The method of claim 11 further comprising the steps of:
 - gripping the cap after the head of the connector has been secured to the inner socket of the hollow body;
 - passing the probe of an electric measuring device through the cap;
 - contacting a head of the connector with the probe; and,
 - observing the electric measuring device to determine whether the connector is conducting electricity.

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