

(19) **DANMARK**



Patent- og
Varemærkestyrelsen

(10) **DK/EP 2504492 T3**

(12) **Oversættelse af
europæisk patentskrift**

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- (51) Int.Cl.: **E 01 C 23/16 (2006.01)** **B 32 B 23/04 (2006.01)** **E 01 C 23/02 (2006.01)**
G 09 F 19/22 (2006.01)
- (45) Oversættelsen bekendtgjort den: **2018-05-07**
- (80) Dato for Den Europæiske Patentmyndigheds bekendtgørelse om meddelelse af patentet: **2018-01-24**
- (86) Europæisk ansøgning nr.: **10833899.7**
- (86) Europæisk indleveringsdag: **2010-11-24**
- (87) Den europæiske ansøgnings publiceringsdag: **2012-10-03**
- (86) International ansøgning nr.: **US2010057955**
- (87) Internationalt publikationsnr.: **WO2011066355**
- (30) Prioritet: **2009-11-25 US 592458**
- (84) Designerede stater: **AL AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO PL PT RO RS SE SI SK SM TR**
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- (54) Benævnelse: **FORFORMET TERMOPLASTISK VEJBELÆGNINGSMARKERING OG FREMGANGSMÅDE UNDER ANVENDELSE AF STORT AGGREGAT TIL FORBEDRET LANGTIDSSKRIDSikkerhed OG REDUCERET AFSÆTNING AF DÆKSPOR**
- (56) Fremdragne publikationer:
EP-A2- 1 270 820
WO-A1-02/38870
WO-A1-93/17188
WO-A1-98/28372
WO-A1-98/50635
WO-A1-99/04097
WO-A2-2009/005553
JP-A- 9 013 487
JP-A- 9 124 974
JP-A- 2005 344 441

DESCRIPTION

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The invention herein pertains to thermoplastic pavement marking materials comprising large grit size aggregate to improve long-term skid resistance and reduce tire tracking, and particularly pertains to such markers as lines, legends, arrows, indicia, and decorative marking including pavement marking patterns utilizing thermoplastic sheeting which utilize an adhesive (sprayable or otherwise) to maintain the integrity of the pattern prior to its application to a substrate.

[0002] More specifically, the invention relates to a preformed or hot applied thermoplastic marking composition and a method of making the thermoplastic composition according to the preamble parts of claims 1 and 8. Such a composition and a method are disclosed in EP 1 270 820 A2.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Traffic markings convey information to drivers and pedestrians by providing exposed visible, reflective, colored and/or tactile surfaces that serve as indicia. In the past, such a function was typically accomplished by painting a traffic surface. Modern marking materials offer significant advantages over paint such as dramatically increased visibility and/or reflectance, improved durability, and temporary removable marking options. Examples of modern pavement marking materials are thermoplastic, pavement marking sheet materials, tapes and raised pavement markers.

[0004] Preformed and hot applied thermoplastic materials used as pavement markings or for other indicia possess many advantages compared to paints and other less durable markings. These materials can be used for years. Known materials using high friction aggregates on the surface to improve friction has been known. The surface applied aggregates provide good initial values, however as the surface is worn due to traffic, the skid resistance decreases. After surface layers containing anti-skid materials become worn out these aggregate materials lose their effectiveness and become slippery because they do not contain high friction particles (of sufficient size to provide good skid properties).

[0005] Current thermoplastics include small particulate aggregate to improve the skid-resistant properties of the markers. However, over time, it has been shown that when such particulates are too small, they become worn too quickly and thus do not provide sufficient skid-resistance for high traffic areas. Today's thermoplastic materials do not include properties of long-term skid resistance and reduced tire tracking. In addition today's preformed thermoplastic decorative patterned materials do not include both the properties of facilitated

assembly via an adhesive spray and long-term skid resistance and reduced tire tracking.

[0006] A review of these issues demonstrates the need for thermoplastic products that both reduces tire tracking and improves long term skid resistance once the marking product has been installed on the road surface and also ensures that the integrity of the product (and pattern if so desired) is maintained during handling and installation.

DESCRIPTION OF RELEVANT ART

[0007] U.S. Patent No. 3,958,891 to Eigenmann, Ludwig, and not assigned, describes an aggregate for securing in a layer of material which is used to form a traffic-regulating indicium, so as to improve the nighttime visibility characteristics and anti-skid characteristics of the traffic-regulating indicium. The aggregate comprises a core body surrounded at least partially by a mass of shock-absorbent binder substance and a plurality of elements that improve either nighttime visibility or anti-skid properties, or both. The elements are arranged in and bound by the binder substance such that the latter substantially fills the interspaces between at least the majority of adjacent pairs of the aforementioned elements, some of which being arranged adjacent to an external surface of the mass so as to impart a roughened texture to the external surface, thereby permitting the aggregate to be firmly secured in the traffic-regulating indicium. The remainders of the elements are distributed among different levels interiorly of the mass so that progressive wear of the aggregate and concomitant detachment of elements from the aggregate causes exposure of others of the elements, thereby conveying long-term durability to the traffic-regulating indicium.

[0008] U.S. Patent No. 4,020,211 to Eigermann, Luwig and not assigned describes a new material adapted to be laid down and adhesively secured on a road surface to provide a traffic regulating sign with the material which has an upper surface exposed to traffic and provided with a plurality of sharp tips projecting above the surface for imparting good non-skid properties thereto, the new material comprising an upper layer adjacent to the upper surface, at least partially embedding hard particles to form sharp tips and consists of a polymeric resin having a high molecular cohesion such as a polyamide resin, a polyurethane resin or a polyterephthalic resin, thereby adding improved wear resistance properties to non-skid and high visibility properties.

[0009] U.S. Patent No. 4,937,124 to Pafilis, Michail and not assigned, describes a nonskid element as an antislipping means on a carpet-like floor covering. The nonskid element is a web that includes a plain bottom wall, and the bottom wall includes a covering with band-like holding pins.

[0010] U.S Patent No. 5,077,117 to Harper, et. al., describes a pavement marking material comprising a flexible base sheet that is conformable to an irregular pavement surface. A durable, wear-resistant, polymeric top layer is adhered to one surface of the base sheet. The top layer is capable of undergoing brittle fracture at a temperature from 0 degrees Centigrade

to 45 degrees Centigrade such that when the base sheet conforms to an irregular surface the top layer readily forms ruptures to relieve stress build-up in the top layer as the regions of the top layer defined by the ruptures remain adhered to and follow the conformance of the base sheet. A plurality of particles are embedded in and protrude from the top layer. The particles comprise retroreflective beads and skid-resistant granules. In a preferred embodiment, the top layer is characterized by a Young's modulus of from about 50,000 psi to about 300,000 psi, and a percent elongation at break of from about 4% to about 35%.

[0011] U.S. Patent No. 6,217,252 to Tolliver, Howard R, et. al., and assigned to 3M, describes a method for marking a transportation surface in which the surface is heated to a temperature above the ambient temperature and a finely-divided, free flowing, flame-sprayable, powder binder material selected from the group consisting of acrylic polymers and copolymers, olefin polymers and copolymers having a number average molecular weight greater than 10,000, urethane polymers and copolymers, curable epoxy resins, ester polymers and copolymers, and blends thereof is melted or substantially softened. The molten or softened binder is then applied to the surface with a particulate topcoat or particulate filler selected from the group consisting of reflective elements; skid-resistant particles, magnetizable particles and mixtures thereof, and finally the applied materials are allowed to cool to form a marker in which the binder adheres directly to the surface.

[0012] U.S. Patent No. 3,935,365 to Eigenmann, Ludwig, and not assigned, describes a tape material for securement to primer layers provided on roadway pavements so as to form traffic-regulating indicia on the latter. The tape material comprises a first layer that contains a polymeric binder having high molecular cohesion and one surface adapted to face towards a roadway pavement and another surface adapted to be exposed to traffic, a plurality of hard particles having a minimum of about 6 on the Mohs' Hardness Scale, some of which should have a sharp tip, distributed among various levels of the aforementioned first layer, and a second layer adapted to be secured to a primer layer on the roadway pavement bonded to one surface of the first layer. The second layer is compatible with the first layer so that a firm bond is formed between them. It is also compatible with the primer layer so that a bond forms between them when the tape material is placed on the primer layer. This tape material imparts good anti-ski properties to a traffic-regulating indicium formed therewith due to the presence of the tips of the hard particles, which provide gripping areas when exposed. It is also an effective skid-resister during wear of the traffic-regulating indicium due to the distribution of the hard particles among various levels of the first layer, which enables fresh hard particles to become exposed as hard particles next to the latter are removed by wear.

[0013] U.S. Patent No. 5,053,253 to Haenggi, Robert, et. al., and assigned to Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company, describes a method of producing skid-resistant substrate marking sheet in which a base sheet is provided and an upward face of the base sheet is coated with a liquid bonding material. A plurality of ceramic skid-resistant spheroids is embedded in the liquid bonding material, wherein the ceramic spheroids are characterized by having rounded surfaces and no substantial points and characterized by Krumbein roundness of at least 0.8. The liquid bonding material is then cured to a solid adherent polymeric matrix

coating with the ceramic skid-resistant spheroids partially embedded, wherein the spheroids comprise a fired ceramic made from various raw materials.

[0014] U.S. Patent No. 5,094,902 to Haenggi, Robert, et. al., and assigned to Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company, describes a skid-resistant, surface marking material, comprising a polymer matrix phase having a top surface and a plurality of opaque, skid-resistant ceramic spheroids partially embedded in and protruding from the top surface of the polymer matrix phase, wherein said ceramic spheroids have rounded surfaces and no substantial points, and wherein said ceramic spheroids have a Krumbain roundness of at least 0.8.

[0015] U.S. Patent No. 6,679,650 to Britt, Jerry, et. al., and assigned to Ennis Paint Incorporated, describes a marked pavement system comprising a pavement surface, a first marking stripe adhered to the top of the pavement surface with a thickness of at least about 40 mils to about 110 mils and comprised of a solidified thermoplastic resin composition with a black pigment, and a second marking stripe adhered to the surface of the first marking stripe with a thickness of at least 40 mils to 750 mils. The second marking stripe should be narrower than the first marking stripe and comprised of a solidified thermoplastic resin composition with a pigment that visibly contrasts with the first marking stripe, wherein the marked pavement system is highly visible during the daylight hours and during periods of rain.

[0016] U.S. Patent No. 5,536,569 to Lasch, James E., et. al., and assigned to Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company, describes a conformable pavement marking with a top surface useful as a marking indicium and a bottom surface, the marking sheet comprising a conformance layer with a thickness of 75 to 1250 micrometers of a composite material. The composite material should include 50 to 85 volume percent of a ductile thermoplastic polymer selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, polybutylene, ethylene copolymers, polyvinylidene fluoride, polytetrafluoroethylene, polyvinyl polymers, polyamides, and polyurethanes, and 15 to 50 volume percent mineral particulate with a mean particle size of at least 1 micrometer. The conformance layer requires, when tested at 25 degrees Celsius using a standard tensile strength apparatus, not more than 35 Newtons force per centimeter of width to deform a sample to 115% of the original sample length when tested at a strain rate of 0.05 sec⁻¹. The top layer is distinct from the conformance layer, 80-250 micrometers thick, and is made of a thermoplastic polyolefin.

[0017] U.S. Patent No. 6,790,880 to Purgett, Mark, et. al., and assigned to 3M, describes a pavement marking comprising a binder having polyurea groups, wherein the binder is prepared from a coating composition comprising one or more aliphatic secondary amines, one or more polyisocyanates, and at least about 15 weight percent non-soluble material based on the weight of the final dried coating, and reflective elements. The patent also discloses the pavement marking wherein the binder is a sprayable, two-part coating composition.

[0018] U.S. Patent No. 6,116,814 to Dietrichson, Stein, and assigned to Rieber & Son, Division Nor-Skilt, describes a method for applying markings or signs on a surface in which a primer

layer comprising an uncured plastic material with two or more components is applied to the surface, a heated mass comprised of a thermoplastic material is laid down on the primer layer, and the curing of the primer layer is initiated by the heat of the aforementioned heated mass.

[0019] U.S. Patent No. 3,664,242 to Harrington, Thomas, et. al., and assigned to Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company, describes a method for forming a marking on a roadway that is ready to bear wheeled road traffic within seconds after application. First, the surface of the roadway is momentarily heated to a temperature between 150 and 500 degrees Fahrenheit. Next, the thus-heated roadway is projected toward a marking material that comprises a continuous stream of solid particles that are capable of passing a screen of about 20 mesh with at least about 80 weight percent being retained on a screen of about 200 mesh, are non-tacky, non-blocking, free-flowing, and solid at temperatures up to about 120 degrees Fahrenheit, and include a coloring agent in an amount sufficient to color a marking formed from the marking material and an organic thermoplastic phase that accounts on the average for at least about 25 volume percent of the marking material and principally comprises a polyamide condensation product of polycarboxylic acid and polyamine. Finally, the individual particles are heated as they proceed toward the roadway to a temperature above 150 degrees Fahrenheit sufficient to at least soften a major portion of the organic thermoplastic phase of the particles before they reach the pavement, the heated condition of the roadway and the particles being such that the particles wet and bond rapidly to the surface of the pavement and coalesce into a film, which subsequently becomes solid, non-tacky, and capable of bearing wheeled road traffic without tracking.

[0020] Great Britain Patent Application No. GB 2429978A to Aubree, Barry Mark, and assigned to Barry Mark Aubree, describes a method of producing a thermoplastic road-marking composition that comprises mixing an opaque pigment, a translucent particulate thermoplastic material and reflective glass beads such that when the thermoplastic material is subsequently melted to bind the composition and the composition is laid as a marking, the glass beads on the visible surface of the markings are not substantially obscured by the opaque pigment. The application also presents a thermoplastic road-marking composition comprising a mixture of a particulate filler material, a pigment, a translucent thermoplastic material and reflective glass beads wherein the pigment clings to the filler material and the reflective glass beads are generally clear of the pigment. Accordingly, the thermoplastic road-marking immediately has retroreflectivity without the requirement for an additional operation of adding glass beads to the surface of the marking and without the need to let the road-marking wear before it becomes retroreflective.

[0021] WIPO Patent Application No. WO03064771A1 to Hong, Le Hoa, et. al., and assigned to Avery Dennison Corporation, describes a method for securing a preformed pavement marking construction with a top surface and at least one perimeter edge to pavement with a relatively flat roadway surface. The method includes adhering the preformed pavement marking construction to the roadway surface, providing a curable structural adhesive, and applying the curable structural adhesive to the at least one perimeter edge such that the curable structural adhesive overlaps a portion of the top surface of the preformed pavement marking

construction at its at least one perimeter edge and a portion of the roadway surface. Finally, the curable structural adhesive is cured to form a traffic-bearing top surface extending between the roadway surface and the preformed pavement marking construction.

[0022] WO 93/17188 A1 discloses a pavement marking tape which is yellow or orange in color and has a top layer, optional conformance layer, optional reinforcing web, and optional adhesive layer wherein said conformance layer is disposed between the top layer and the adhesive layer. Top layer contains optional retroreflective elements and optional anti-skid particles. Tape also comprises optional conformance layer and optional reinforcing web. Preferably anti-skid particles exhibit a hardness of at least about 6° on the Mohs Hardness Scale, more preferably at least about 7°. Typically, average dimension of each anti-skid particle is between about 0.1 and about 1.0 millimeters, preferably between about 0.5 and about 0.8 millimeters. In many instances, it is desirable for adhesive layer to be a pressure-sensitive adhesive to facilitate application of tape to the pavement. Colored top layers of the pavement marking tape may be coated on the back or under side with contact cement just before application to the pavement, upon which contact cement is also typically preapplied.

[0023] EP 1 270 820 A2 discloses a surface marking for roads, which is made up of a number of standard components and contains, inter alia, resin, one or more thermoplastic polymers, plasticizers, glass beads, pigment, reflecting material, friction-enhancing material and filler. The friction-enhancing material may be for example particles of silicon carbide, corundum, quartz or similar hard materials with a maximum particle size of 2 mm, preferably between 0.1 and 1 mm. The content of these friction materials can be up to 5-30%. The marking comprises at least two layers. The lower layer is made of a heat-activatable adhesive material. The lower layer preferably has an application temperature which is lower than the application temperature for upper layer(s).

[0024] WO 98/50635 A1 discloses a pavement marking which may be adhered to a roadway so as to be visually inconspicuous to motor vehicle drivers. The pavement marking comprises a base sheet that is adhered to a pavement surface by means of a suitable adhesive. The base sheet comprises an optional conformance layer and a top polymeric layer. Skid-resistant granules are deposited on the upper surface of the top polymeric layer of the base sheet. Skid-resistant granules are used to provide a marking material preferably having a residual skid resistance in the British Portable Skid Resistance test of at least 50 BPN. BPN means the British Portable Number as measured using a Portable Skid Resistance Tester built by Road Research Laboratory, Crawthorne, Berkshire, England. Typically, the granules are either spheroidal or irregular in shape, and range from about 0.5 to 3.0 millimeters in diameter. Skid-resistant granules may be made of a variety of materials, including but not limited to ceramic, sand, stone, aluminum oxide, and glass.

[0025] WO 99/04097 A1 discloses a direction-indicating retroreflective pavement marking. A retroreflective article contains a multilayer base sheet having thermoplastic layer containing a light scattering agent disposed on a conformance layer. Protuberances contain a light scattering agent and are adhered to the thermoplastic layer. Optical element sets are partially

embedded in different portions of a protuberance. Optical elements embedded in the thermoplastic layer can be either parts of sets or both. Typically, a thermoplastic protuberance is a raised polymeric core or body. Typically, the protuberances are about 0.2 to about 6.0 millimeters in height and about 1 to 20 millimeters in diameter to be of sufficient size so as not to be submerged completely by water in a typical rain shower. More preferably, the protuberances are about 1 to about 4 millimeters in height and are about 2 to about 8 millimeters in diameter at the base. The latter sizes are more preferred because they tend to provide a good balance between retroreflectivity and wearability, aid in draining water away from the retroreflective portions, and provide a wear surface to prolong the pavement marker's life.

[0026] It is the object to provide an alternative thermoplastic marking and an alternative method of making same.

[0027] This object is achieved by the subject matter of the independent claims.

[0028] Preferred embodiments of the invention are the subject matters of the dependent claims.

[0029] The disclosed review of the relevant art shows the need for a thermoplastic pavement marking method using an adhesive (sprayable or otherwise) that maintains the integrity of the pattern and a thermoplastic pavement marking composition that includes large grit size aggregate to improve long term skid resistance and reduce tire-tracking.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0030] Figure 1 is a diagram of a type of preformed thermoplastic pavement marker, which is more fully described below.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0031] Figure 1 illustrates a typical partial decorative pavement marking pattern (10) for application to concrete, asphalt or other suitable substrates. Marking pattern (10) is a brick and mortar pattern used herein for illustration purposes but as would be understood various other thermosetting and thermoplastic patterns are commercially available such as herringbone, cobblestone, pavement slabs, horizontal signage, logos and other designs. Also, while many colors are available for the pavement marking patterns, typically different sections of each pattern are of different colors, such as a "light" grid or mortar color and a "darker" brick or insert color. The marking patterns typically consist of two or more sections.

[0032] Preferred marking pattern (10) shown for demonstration purposes consists of two

separate thermoplastic sections, first section (11) represents a grid or mortar joint and second section (12) represents a brick or insert (14) with borders (18) as represented. Sections (11) and (12) are generally formed independent of each other due to the differences in color. Pavement marking pattern (10) is planar and is conventionally formed from a standard thermoplastic. The top portion (11) of the marking pattern is bordered. Large aggregates are shown throughout the marker patterns.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0033] The present disclosure describes a preformed thermoplastic pavement marking or hot melt applied material with improved long term skid resistance and reduced tire tracking once the pavement marking has been adhered to road surfaces or other solid substrates, The need exists to produce preformed thermoplastic pavement marking materials with improved skid resistance, especially for use in wet conditions and over long term use to reduced tire tracking - a real detriment to the usefulness of thermoplastic pavement markings in locations where they are desirable. The preformed thermoplastic material of the present invention is comprised of about 20% binder and 80% "intermix", where the intermix includes non-organics such as silica, calcium, and other inorganic pigments as well as large high friction aggregate capable of passing through sieves sizes of about 4 to about 12 together with somewhat smaller aggregate that is applied to the surface either prior to, or during installation. The surface applied anti-skid materials provide high initial friction properties, while large size aggregate in the intermix provides long term skid resistance and improves initial friction properties by creating an appropriately textured surface.

[0034] To achieve the desired traction and friction properties it should be recognized that there is a difference between slip resistance, which relates to traffic traveling over the pavement markers at a slow speed and to pedestrian traffic traveling over the same pavement marker surfaces and related to the static COF (coefficient of friction). Skid resistance relates, however to traffic traveling over the pavement markers at high speed, and depends on surface texture. Skid resistance is more applicable to the type of vehicular traffic.

[0035] Common test methods for measuring the effectiveness of these pavement markers for slip and skid resistance include BPN (ASTM E303), which is the most commonly used test methodology but does not reflect performance at high speeds and does not provide for measuring static COF values.

[0036] Instead, the "Locked Wheel Test" which produces "FN" or Friction number and described by ASTM E274 is used by many states within the United States and provides a methodology for measuring friction values at high speeds, simulates real traffic conditions, and requires actual road installation. There are also other test methods for measuring friction at high speeds. Results from different test methods can be normalized or combined using the IFI (International Friction Index, ASTM E1960) which provides for combining friction and texture indices (F60 and S_p).

[0037] The required materials for the present invention to achieve both the necessary slip and skid resistance are those that contain high friction large aggregates in the intermix with a weight percent content of from 5 percent to 65 percent. The optimal size of the large aggregates is from

about 4 to about 16 grit (about 5 to about 1.0 millimeters) depending on the specific thickness of the thermoplastic sheets that contain the marker patterns. The present invention also includes cases where the thermoplastic road marker patterns contain surface applied large aggregate in a range from about 14 to about 20 grit (about 0.8 mm to about 1.2 mm). Product using small particle aggregate sizes (approximately 24 grit or mesh) covered the surface area of the thermoplastic marking sheets more effectively, however, these aggregates did not provide the required skid or tire track resistance.

[0038] It has been shown that it is possible to use single grit size aggregate in the intermix. The use of an intermix of different grit sized aggregates in different proportions based on the need for the future use of different materials (larger sizes for thicker and larger thermoplastic sheets and smaller aggregates for narrow strips) is also part of the present disclosure.

[0039] The aggregates used primarily exhibit a Mohs hardness of greater than 6, including corundum, quartz, granite, calcined clay, nickel slag, silicon dioxide and others (trade names of such materials include Mulcoa grades 47, 60 and 70, AlphaStar®, Ultrablast®, and Alodur® which provide hardness ratings in the range of 6.5 to 9). A portion of the intermix used with the thermoplastic road marking includes 16 grit size aggregate also with a hardness in the Mohs scale reading of greater than 6, which has never been tried before in preformed or hot melt applied thermoplastic surface applications, and has resulted in improved friction.

[0040] An additional desired result is improved overall skid resistance of the preformed thermoplastic markers without any associated discoloration. The aforesaid special aggregates also improve the coefficient of sliding friction (COF) as determined per the ASTM E274 test. As the COF decreases below a certain level on the surrounding asphalt, a small wheel grabs onto the asphalt and if the COF is reduced on the pavement marking too much, undesirable skidding will occur. It is desirable that the COF of the preformed or hot melt thermoplastic match or be greater than the road pavement surface. The COF, in this case, as measured per ASTM E274 requires using a small cart pulled behind a car with a wheel attached to the bottom of the cart that rides at the speed of the car, thus touching the pavement surface, which eventually results in locking the wheel, thereby allowing for measurement of the force of the cart on the surface.

[0041] In this case, the result of using large particle aggregates is anti-intuitive, in that as there is more "gripping" to the thermoplastic marker surface adhered to the underneath pavement surface, the traffic that travels over this marker pavement surface with the special aggregate results in providing less tire tracking and skid marks. Tire tracking is measured by the size and number of undesirable resultant markings caused by traffic as well as discoloration of the thermoplastic marking surface. The reduction in COF does, however,

correlate with increasing skid and when the COF increases, this will correlate with decreasing skid.

[0042] Therefore, a surprising result found during the course of experimentation and resulting in an important embodiment of the present application is that these thermoplastic marking surfaces stay cleaner and possess less tire tracking than marking surfaces without the special large aggregate particles described above.

[0043] There is a strong need in the industry to provide a layer of preformed thermoplastic so that these marking surfaces are skid resistant and are used for any crosswalk material. There is also a requirement that the skid resistance (which is quantified by friction number) also provides tire tracking reduction.

[0044] An additional embodiment and surprising result is that in the past, without the use of these large aggregate materials, the wheel path or track is almost always darker in the section of the surface where the vehicle travels over the marking, so that normal free rolling traffic which passes over the thermoplastic pavement markers will cause darkening. In the case of the present invention, this is not true and this undesirable result has been eliminated. The turning traffic, which causes more tire shear, also does not cause darker tire tracking.

[0045] In the present invention, the use of uniform particulate material or blends of particulate materials for the aggregate with differing hardness values, providing more economical solutions, can be introduced into the intermix during formulation. The introduction of these blends usually occurs prior to extrusion and completion of the thermoplastic pavement marking. The aggregates and other particles such as glass beads and the inorganic choices stated above can also, however, be dropped on the hot material during installation and completely embedded into body of the thermoplastic marking material in that fashion. The preformed thermoplastic surface marking product can be applied using pressure sensitive adhesives as well as by flame torching.

[0046] The resultant properties of the (once applied) thermoplastic marking surfaces were measured using International Friction Index (IFI) consisting of two parameters:

- F60 - calibrated friction at 60 km/h calculated from DFT20 - friction measured at 20 km/h
- S_p - speed constant that depends on surface texture presented as MPD (mean profile depth, mm).

[0047] Materials without large high friction aggregate have an F60 of about 0.07 to about 0.10 and an MPD of 0.15 mm to about 0.3 mm. Depending on the aggregate size used in the present invention, when the intermix becomes exposed, the F60 increases to between about 0.17 to about 0.4 and the MPD to between about 0.50 mm to about 0.75 mm. For comparison hot mix asphalt has an F60 value of about 0.25 after being exposed to traffic extended lengths of time.

[0048] In addition, in recent years increasing numbers of municipalities, office complexes, shopping centers and other commercial developments have utilized thermoplastic pavement markings with various patterns and designs to guide, decorate, and protect high traffic areas such as highways, pedestrian crosswalks, parking lots and business entrances. Such patterns may include a first section or grid, for example to represent the mortar joints in a "brick" design and a plurality of second sections or "bricks" which are coplanar therewith, usually in a color different from the mortar color. The second section or bricks which are separately manufactured are inserted into the first section or grid before application of the pattern to the pavement. Various two section marking patterns are commonly available such as: herringbone, standard brick, cobblestone, paving slabs and many other designs. Marking patterns with more than two sections are also commonly available such as horizontal highway and street signage, logos and many others.

[0049] As hereinbefore mentioned, these marking patterns consist of two or more independent sections which must be carefully assembled and handled before applying to pavements such as asphalt, concrete or other suitable substrates. These marking patterns are placed at desired locations such as road crosswalks, intersections, parking lots or other sites. In some cases heat is then applied to soften the pavement marking pattern causing it to firmly adhere to the substrate. Various adhesives can also be used to adhere the marking pattern to the substrate.

[0050] While the purchase of such pavement marking patterns is relatively inexpensive, much time and labor is devoted to the assembly and application of the pattern to the substrate. Most patterns consist of two or more sections which are independently formed for manual assembly at the job site and time and effort is needed to assemble and maintain the integrity of a pattern before the heat treatment. Usually the pattern placed on the substrate must be moved manually for adjustment purposes. During such movement, the independent sections in the pattern inadvertently become unaligned, requiring reinsertion or realignment. If the realignment is not precisely accomplished, the marking pattern will have lost its integrity and the entire pattern must be removed manually from the substrate, the substrate cleaned and a second attempt at the application made with the reinserted or new marking pattern. This re-application results in extra time, labor, and materials. In the past, to maintain the integrity of the marking pattern before the heat treatment and during the handling and placement, "spot adhesives" have been used which remain somewhat "tacky" after being applied to the bottom of the patterns at the grid intersections to maintain pattern integrity. However, these small adhesive circles or "spots" are generally a different type of polymer than the marking pattern and can prevent proper attachment and easy movement of the marking pattern on the substrate at the spot adhesive locations before and during the heat application of the marking. Also, certain spot adhesives are not compatible with the plastic materials from which the patterns are formed and can cause the pavement marking sections to separate from the substrate after the heat application, as only a weak bond is formed with the substrate.

[0051] The major object of the present invention is to provide for long term skid resistance

and reduced tire tracking through the addition of large grit size aggregate. The above stated objectives are realized by providing a conventional pavement marking pattern formed of a thermosetting or thermoplastic which may have two or more sections, manually joined by bridging the bottom surface thereof with an adhesive having substantially the same temperature softening point as the sections of the marking pattern. The adhesive can be sprayed primarily along the intersections of the pattern to cover a percentage (approximately from 5% to 90%) of the patterned bottom surface area while bridging the intersections. The more intricate the pattern (with more joints or intersections) the greater the percentage of adhesive coverage required. The spray adhesive can be a typical polyamide, EVA based hot melt adhesive or other, such as styrene-isoprene-styrene copolymers, styrene-butadiene-styrene copolymers, ethylene ethyl acrylate copolymers, and polyurethane reactive, and preferably consists of a hot melt polyamide resin based adhesive which is sprayed in a circular or spiral string like configuration at a temperature at or above its softening point. The sprayed hot adhesive strikes the marking pattern and adheres, bridging and bonding the pattern sections to maintain pattern integrity during subsequent handling. Uni-Rez 2633 as sold by Arizona Chemical Company of P.O. Box 550850, Jacksonville, Florida 32225 is the main ingredient in the preferred hot melt adhesive. The preferred hot melt adhesive is formulated with Uni-Rez 2633, ester modified rosins, fillers, extenders, levelers and other conventional components.

[0052] In a typical manufacturing process, various sections of a pavement marking pattern (e.g. a brick and mortar pattern or any other desired pattern) are factory assembled and while in assembled form, the bottom of the pattern is sprayed with the hot melt adhesive described above using preferably spray gun model: Hysol-175-spray as manufactured by Loctite Corporation of 1001 Tout Brook Crossing, Rocky hill, Connecticut 06067, having various pressures and nozzle settings to select from, depending on the viscosity of the particular adhesive employed. A circular or spiral string-like adhesive configuration is preferred for the spray.

[0053] Once the sprayed hot melt adhesive has cooled, the grid and inserts are suitably bridged and joined and the pavement marking pattern is packaged for shipment. Upon receipt at the job site, the packages are opened and after the intended substrate, usually asphalt or concrete is properly cleaned and swept, the marking pattern is then placed on the substrate without concern of disassembly during handling, movement and adjustment. Once suitably placed, a heat application is delivered from a conventional source which softens the marking pattern and the underlying sprayed adhesive, both of which have the approximate same temperature softening point to thereby affix the pavement marking pattern to the substrate. Time and labor are thereby saved as the marking pattern sections have been adhered to form a unified pattern by the hot melt adhesive.

[0054] As stated above, the present invention includes larger grit size aggregate than is normally used in similar preformed thermoplastic pavement marking products. Specifically, the aggregate should be between 8 and 12 mesh (grit) in size and may be comprised of quartz, corundum, crushed gravel, crushed granite, or any combination thereof. The aggregate used

may also measure 6 or greater on the Mohs Hardness Scale. This larger grit size improves the skid resistance properties of the pavement marker and also significantly reduces tire tracking in comparison to other similar products, because it ensures that the product wears down more slowly, conveying greater durability and also longer term skid resistance - often through the end-of-life of the applied preformed thermoplastic.

[0055] Other advantages achieved using these working examples include the fact that when the surface applied aggregate provides high initial skid resistance using aggregate in the intermix, the surface maintains high skid properties during the entire period of use of the pavement markings and also provides increasing skid resistance.

[0056] Another unexpected effect of the use of large aggregate intermix within the preformed thermoplastic or hot melt applied markers, is the decrease or essentially complete elimination of tire skid marks on the thermoplastic marking surfaces. Bigger aggregates leading to reduction or elimination of tire tracking was also an unexpected result.

[0057] Among additional objectives of the invention include providing a relatively inexpensive pavement marking pattern having two or more sections in which the sections are joined by use of an applied adhesive and to provide a method for forming a pavement marking pattern which allows cost efficient factory assembly of the pattern and which prevents dislodging and separation of the pattern sections during handling, transportation and application.

[0058] Other objects of the invention are to provide an adhesive which can be conveniently sprayed onto the back of pavement marking patterns which will sufficiently adhere thereto and prevent separation of the sections during handling, and not deteriorate the bond between the pavement marking pattern and the substrate and to provide a method for easy application of the adhesively sprayed marking pattern to the substrate.

[0059] Incorporation of large grit aggregate into the pavement marking pattern allows for manufacturing with decorative markings on the surface of the preformed thermoplastic sheets that provides excellent anti-skid properties.

WORKING AND COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES

Test Methodology

[0060] The surface texture of the preformed thermoplastic is measured using a laser-based Circular Track Meter (CTM) with a vertical resolution of 3 microns (μm). The texture is reported in terms of the Mean Profile Depth (MPD) in millimeters. Then the friction of the surface is measured using a Dynamic Friction Tester (DFT). In the DFT, a disk with three rubber sliders attached to the disk rotates at tangential velocities up to 90 km/h then drops onto the surface.

The torque generated, as the disk slows once it engages the surface, provides an indication of the friction at various speeds. The output from the DFT is reported as unitless DFT numbers at various speeds (typically 20, 40, 60 and 80 km/h). The DFT and CTM instruments are manufactured by NIPPO Sangyo Co. (Japan). Together, the results from the CTM and DFT are used to calculate a value known as the International Friction Index (IFI, F60). The IFI can also be estimated by other types of equipment including the widely used ASTM E274 towed friction trailer test method as well as the British pendulum test method and results of different test methods have been found to correlate.

WORKING EXAMPLE 1:

[0061] An example of the hydrocarbon resin composition for the preformed thermoplastic of the present invention is provided as follows:

Material composition

Escorez 1315 -	10%
C5 hydrocarbon resin -	5%
Refined mineral oil -	2%
Escorene EVA MV 02514	3%
Fumed silica -	0.5%
Titanium dioxide (Rutile) -	10%
Glass beads Type 1 -	30%
Corundum Grit 12	20%
CaCO ₃ -	19.5%

[0062] The material composition has a softening temperature (Ring and Ball) of 118°C measured according to ASTM D36-06 entitled "Standard Test Method for Softening Point of Bitumen (Ring-and-Ball Apparatus)".

[0063] The thermoplastic material composition was extruded using a casting die to create 125 mil thick preformed thermoplastic sheets. As the sheets were extruded glass beads were dropped onto the melted thermoplastic material. Subsequently at a location further from the die exit on the manufacturing line, corundum grit 16 was added to the thermoplastic and indented visual heating indicators were applied to the surface.

[0064] Using a Flint-2000 propane torch, the material composition was applied on two square cement boards (20 inches by 20 inches). One of the panels was tested after application, another was abraded (sand blasted) to expose the intermix aggregate.

[0065] The properties of material tested with DFT and CTM as described above are provided

in Table 1 below;

Table 1: DFT, F60, and MPD Values for Working Example 1

Example 1	DFT20	F60	MPD, mm
As Applied	0.733	0.425	0.61
After Abrasion	0.853	0.455	0.71

WORKING EXAMPLE 2

[0066] An example of preformed thermoplastic material based on an alkyd resin composition is provided as:

Material Composition for Working Example 2

Polyamide resin Uni-Rez 2633	7.2%
Modified rosin resin Sylvacote 4981 -	6,8%
Phthalate plasticizer -	2.8%
PE based wax -	2.0% 0.5%
Fumed silica -	0.5%
Corundum grit 16	30%
TiO2 -	10%
CaCO3 -	40.7%

[0067] The material composition softening temperature (R&B) is 124°C

[0068] The material composition was extruded, applied on cement boards, and tested similarly to the Example 1 except that corundum grit 24 was dropped on the surface during extrusion. The results are provided in Table 2 below:

Table 2: DFT, F60, and MPD Values for Working Example 2

Example 2	DFT20	F60	MPD, mm
As Applied	0.517	0.266	0.463
After Abrasion	0.794	0.379	0.51

WORKING EXAMPLE 3

[0069]

Alkyd type base layer for hot applied formulation

Modified rosin resin Sylvacote 4981 -	8%
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Modified rosin resin Sylvacote 7021 -	9%
Castor oil based plasticizer -	3%
PE based wax -	2.0%
Quartz mix with grit 12 to 20 gradation	30%
TiO2 -	10%
CaCO3 -	38 %

[0070] The material composition softening temperature (R&B) is 121°C

[0071] The formulation, after mixing, provided 4-inch wide draw-down plaques. No anti-skid aggregate was applied to the surface of the plaques. While still warm and sufficiently flexible the draw-down plaques were applied to the cement boards covering the entire 20 x 20 inch area and creating sufficient space for testing, using CMT and DFT testers. One of the boards was tested after application and another after abrasion by sand blasting to expose intermix aggregate.

Table 3: DFT, F60, and MPD Values for Working Example 3

Example 3	DFT20	F60	MPD, mm
As Applied	0.15	0.13	0.34
After Abrasion	0.70	0.33	0.46

WORKING EXAMPLE 4

[0072] An application of preformed thermoplastic insignia using adhesive backed preformed thermoplastic sheeting was also tested. Pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) was applied to the sheets of material made according to the Example 2 and pre-cut in the shape of AASHTO approved letters. The letters were applied at the intersection to create a warning "STOP" sign using a READYMARK ® tamper. The friction properties of these preformed thermoplastic sheets yielded results similar to the "as applied" properties presented in Example 2.

WORKING EXAMPLE 5

[0073] A decorative brick pattern was made using colored and patterned thermoplastic sheeting manufactured according to the Example 1 including a dark red color for bricks and a white color for the grout. The sections of the patterned thermoplastic sheeting were joined together using EVA based hot melt adhesive. Sheeting was applied to the crosswalk and exhibited properties similar to the "as applied" properties presented in Example 1.

WORKING EXAMPLE 6

[0074] Alkyd based material with blended large aggregate intermix

Material Composition for Working Example 6

Polyamide resin Uni-Rez 2633 -	7.5%
Modified rosin resin Sylvacote 4981 -	6.5%
Phthalate plasticizer -	3.2%
PE based wax -	1.6%
Fumed silica -	0.5%
Corundum grit 12	5%
Mulcoa 47, gradation 8-20 grit	25%
TiO ₂ -	10%
CaCO ₃ -	40.7%

[0075] Material was processed according to Example 1, with a 90 mil thickness and corundum grit (or mesh size) 24 was applied during extrusion.

Table 4: DFT, F60, and MPD Values for Working Example 4

Example 6	DFT20	F60	MPD, mm
As Applied	0.47	0.248	0.46
After Abrasion	0.754	0.392	0.51

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE 1

[0076] As an illustration, Comparative Example 1 uses smaller aggregate in the intermix. The preformed thermoplastic was identical to that of Working Example 2, except that the Corundum grit 30 was used in the intermix and as a drop on instead of corundum grit 16.

Material Composition for Comparative Example 1

Polyamide resin Uni-Rez 2633 -	7.2%
Modified rosin resin Sylvacote 4981 -	6.8%
Phthalate plasticizer -	2.8%
PE based wax -	2.0%
Fumed silica -	0.5%
Corundum grit 30	30%
TiO ₂ -	10%

CaCO ₃ -	40.7%
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Table 5: DFT, F60, and MPD Values for Comparative Example 1

Comp. Example 1	DFT20	F60	MPD, mm
As Applied	0.42	0.192	0.28
After Abrasion	0.36	0.172	0.26

[0077] The data shown above, in Table 5 when compared with the previous Tables (1-4) clearly indicates the (heretofore unexpected) improvement over the small size corundum after abrasion (wear) for DFT20 (0.70 vs. 0.36) and calibration friction number F60 (0.35-0.45 vs. 0.17).

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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- WO9904097A1 [0025]

PATENTKRAV

1. Forformet eller med varme påført termoplastisk markeringssammensætning omfattende en plan topoverfladedel og en plan bundoverfladedel, der er
5 koplanare i forhold til hinanden, hvor bundoverfladedelen er direkte påført på et underlag gennem påføring af varme eller tryk eller både varme og tryk, og hvor topoverfladedelen omfatter en blanding, der forefindes i hele den termoplastiske sammensætning;
hvor blandingen indeholder aggregat med stor kornstørrelse i intervallet fra ca. 1,0
10 mm til ca. 5 mm (kornstørrelse ca. 16 til 4), hvorved afsætning af dækspor reduceres eller elimineres, medens langtidsskridsikkerhed også forbedres, hvor den termoplastiske markeringssammensætning er en beklædning, hvilken beklædning omfatter anti-skridmaterialer omfattende aggregatet med stor kornstørrelse, der enten befinder sig i blandingen eller er påført på topoverfladedelen, og hvor yderligere partikler er påført på topoverfladedelen,
15 **kendetegnet ved**, at partiklerne er aggregater, glasperler, herunder glasperler af type 1 og type 3, samt aggregat med stor kornstørrelse i intervallet fra 0,8 til 2,4 mm (20 til 8 mesh eller kornstørrelse), hvilket aggregat omfatter knust granit, knust grus eller en vilkårlig
20 kombination af den knuste granit og det knuste grus.
2. Forformet eller med varme påført termoplastisk sammensætning ifølge krav 1, hvor aggregatet tilvejebringer en overfladeruhed målt under anvendelse af et kalibreret friktionsnummer F60, som giver værdier på fra ca. 0,17 til ca. 0,40, og
25 hvor aggregatet indlejret i overfladen af topoverfladedelen tilvejebringer en overfladeruhed, der måles som en middelprofildybde, og hvor denne middelprofildybde ligger mellem ca. 0,35 og ca. 0,75 mm.
3. Forformet eller med varme påført termoplastisk sammensætning ifølge ét af
30 de foregående krav, hvori den termoplastiske beklædning med aggregatet med stor kornstørrelse er med retroreflekterende glasperler.
4. Forformet eller med varme påført termoplastisk sammensætning ifølge ét af de foregående krav, hvori aggregatet med stor kornstørrelse måler mere end 6 på

Mohs hårdhedsskala.

5. Forformet eller med varme påført termoplastisk sammensætning ifølge ét af de foregående krav, hvori bundoverfladedelen indeholder et adhæsiv til binding af
5 bundoverfladedelen til en vilkårlig overfladebelægning.

6. Forformet eller med varme påført termoplastisk sammensætning ifølge ét af kravene 1 til 5, hvori topoverfladedelen indeholder mønstrede markeringer, hvor de mønstrede markeringer er linjer, tekster, pile, tegn, herunder farvede overflader
10 og sektioner (11, 12, 14) af overfladerne forskellige fra eller sammen med en hvid farve.

7. Forformet eller med varme påført termoplastisk sammensætning ifølge krav 5, hvori adhæsivet er spraybart og tillader forbindelse mellem skæringspunktet på
15 de plane bundoverflader af gittersektionen (11) og indsætningssektionen (12, 14) til dannelse af det samlede belægningsmarkeringsmønster (10), og hvori adhæsivet omfatter ethylenvinylacetat (EVA)-baseret varmebestandige eller andre ækvivalente varmebestandige polyamidharpikser.

20 8. Fremgangsmåde til fremstilling af en forformet eller med varme påført termoplastisk markeringssammensætning omfattende en plan topoverfladedel og en plan bundoverfladedel, der er koplanare i forhold til hinanden, hvor bundoverfladedelen er direkte påført på et underlag gennem påføring af varme eller tryk eller både varme og tryk, og hvor topoverfladedelen omfatter en blanding,
25 der forefindes i hele den termoplastiske sammensætning; hvor blandingen indeholder aggregat med stor kornstørrelse i intervallet fra ca. 1,0 mm til ca. 5 mm (kornstørrelse ca. 16 til 4), hvorved afsætning af dækspor reduceres eller elimineres, medens langtidsskridsikkerhed også forbedres, hvor den termoplastiske markeringssammensætning er en beklædning, hvilken
30 beklædning omfatter anti-skridmaterialer omfattende aggregatet med stor kornstørrelse, der enten befinder sig i blandingen eller er påført på topoverfladedelen, og hvor yderligere partikler er påført på topoverfladedelen,
kendetegnet ved, at
partiklerne er aggregater, glasperler, herunder glasperler af type 1 og type 3, samt

aggregat med stor kornstørrelse i intervallet fra 0,8 til 2,4 mm (20 til 8 mesh eller kornstørrelse), hvilket aggregat omfatter knust granit, knust grus eller en vilkårlig kombination af den knuste granit og det knuste grus.

- 5 9. Fremgangsmåde til fremstilling af den termoplastiske sammensætning ifølge krav 8, hvor aggregatet tilvejebringer en overfladeruhed, friktionsnummer F60, på ca. 0,17 til ca. 0,40, og hvor aggregatet indlejret i overfladen af topoverfladedelen tilvejebringer en overfladeruhed, der måles som en middelprofildybde mellem ca. 0,35 og ca. 0,75 mm.

10

10. Fremgangsmåde til fremstilling af den termoplastiske sammensætning ifølge krav 8 eller 9, hvori beklædningen med aggregatet med stor kornstørrelse er med retroreflekterende glasperler, hvor glasperlerne enten forefindes i blandingen eller påføres på topoverfladedelen før, under eller efter påføring på et underlag.

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DRAWINGS

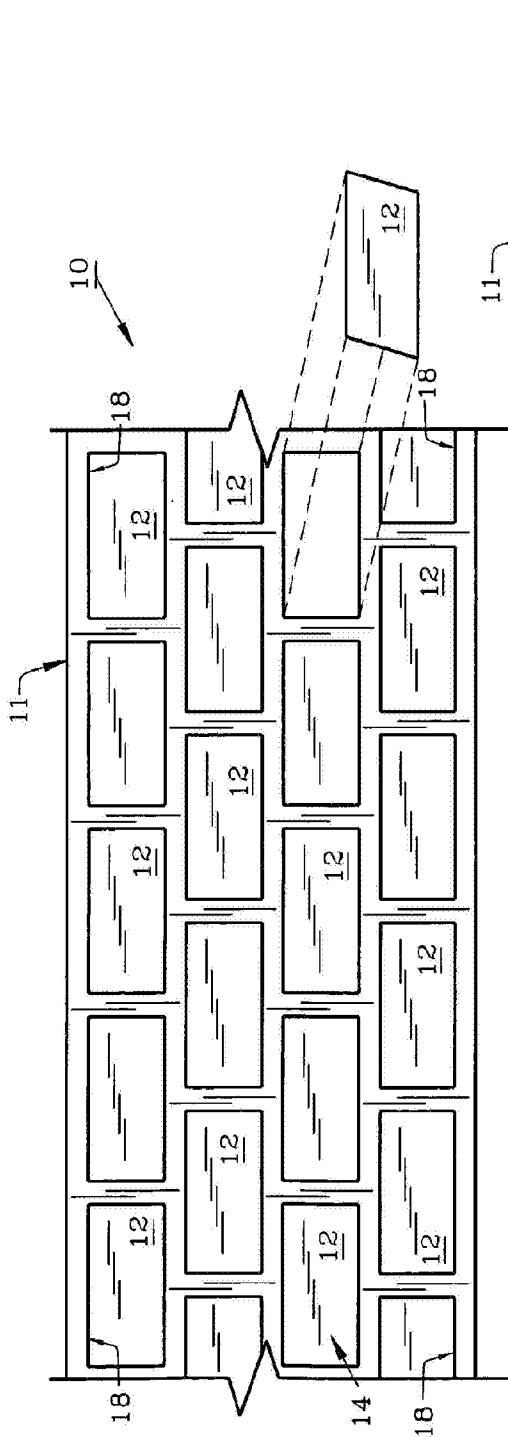


FIG. 1

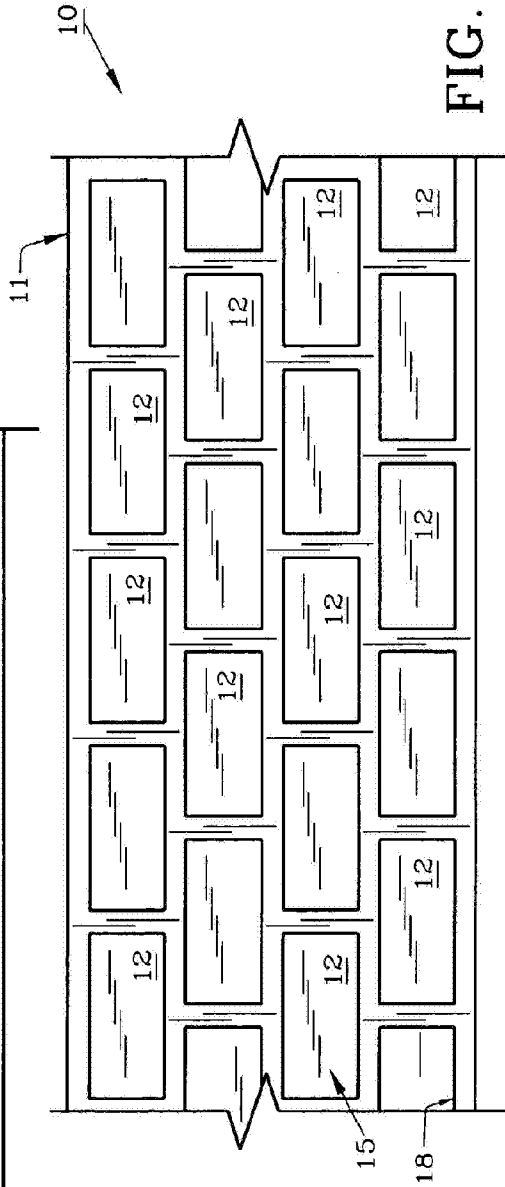


FIG. 2