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(54) **METHODS OF PACKAGING PRODUCTS AND PACKAGING ARRANGEMENTS USING A SHRINKABLE PROTECTIVE COVER TO KEEP A GRAPHIC ON A BAND FORMED, INTACT, AND VISIBLE**

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B65D 71/08 (2006.01)

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(57)

ABSTRACT

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Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 13/615,718, filed on Sep. 14, 2012, now Pat. No. 9,708,085, which is a continuation of application No. 13/279,758, filed on Oct. 24, 2011.

(60) Provisional application No. 61/410,135, filed on Nov. 4, 2010.

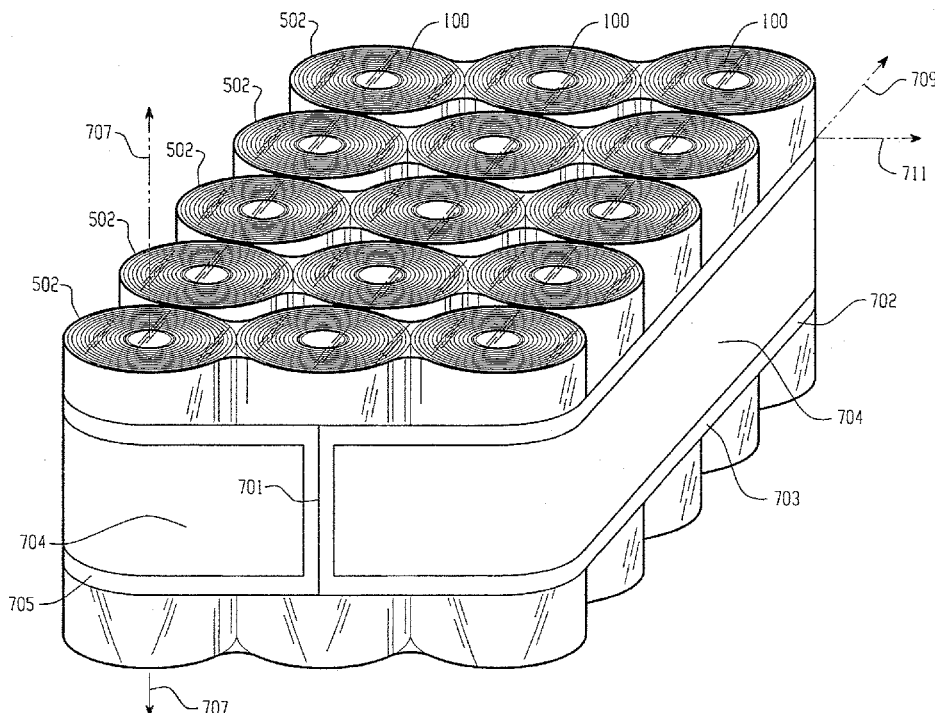
Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**

B65B 13/02 (2006.01)

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A method of packaging products and a packaging arrangement. A first product unit is wrapped at least in a first protective cover. The first protective cover envelops the first product unit and creates a first wrapped first product unit. A second product is wrapped at least in a second protective cover, such that the second protective cover envelops the second product unit and creates a second wrapped second product unit. The first wrapped first product unit is arranged adjacent to the second wrapped second product unit to create a product unit arrangement. A band is formed circumferentially around the product unit arrangement to create a secured product unit arrangement. The band has at least one graphic. The secured product unit arrangement is wrapped in a protective wrapper. The protective wrapper is heated to shrink the wrapper around the secured product unit arrangement. The graphic remains intact and visible.



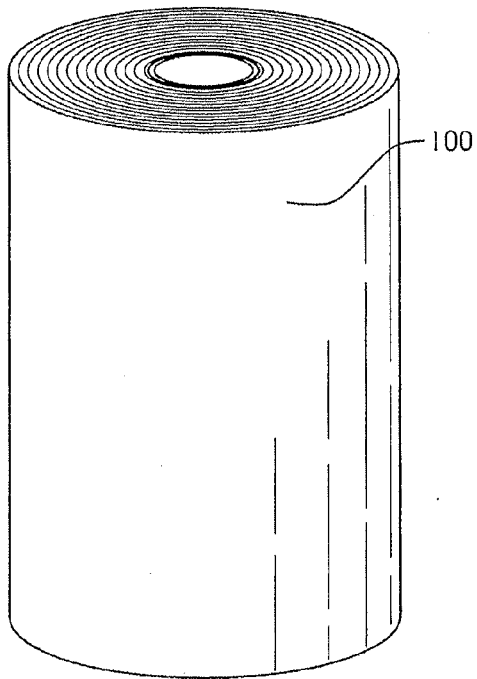


Fig. 1

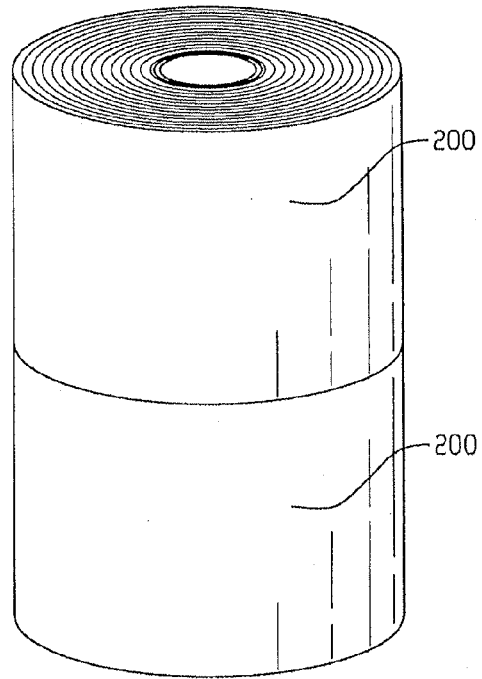


Fig. 2

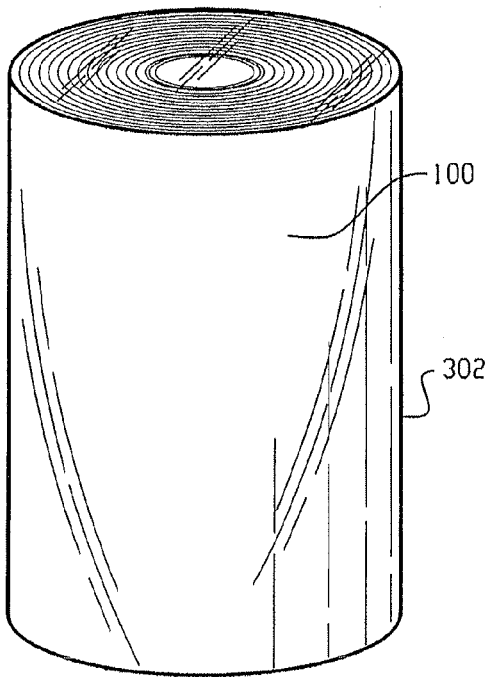


Fig. 3

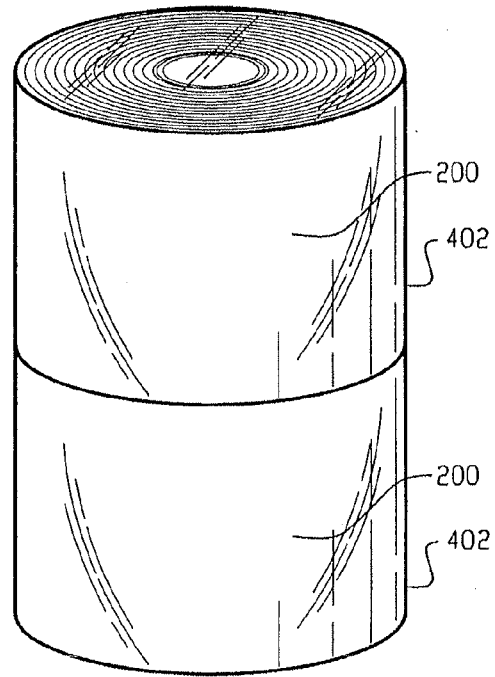


Fig. 4

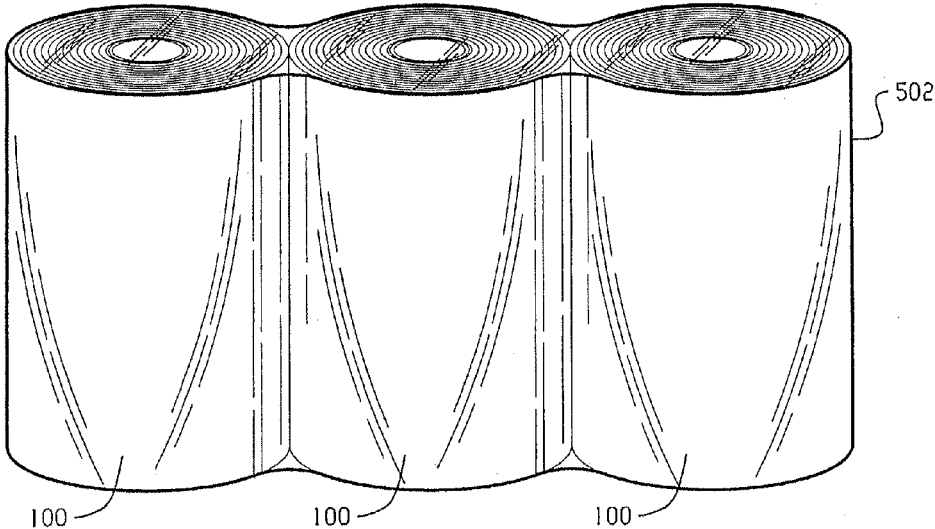


Fig. 5

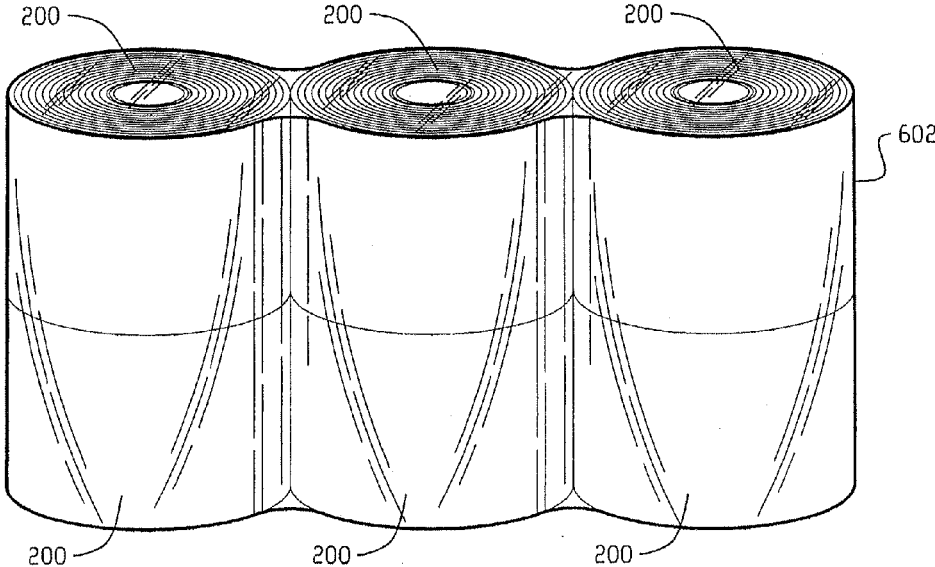


Fig. 6

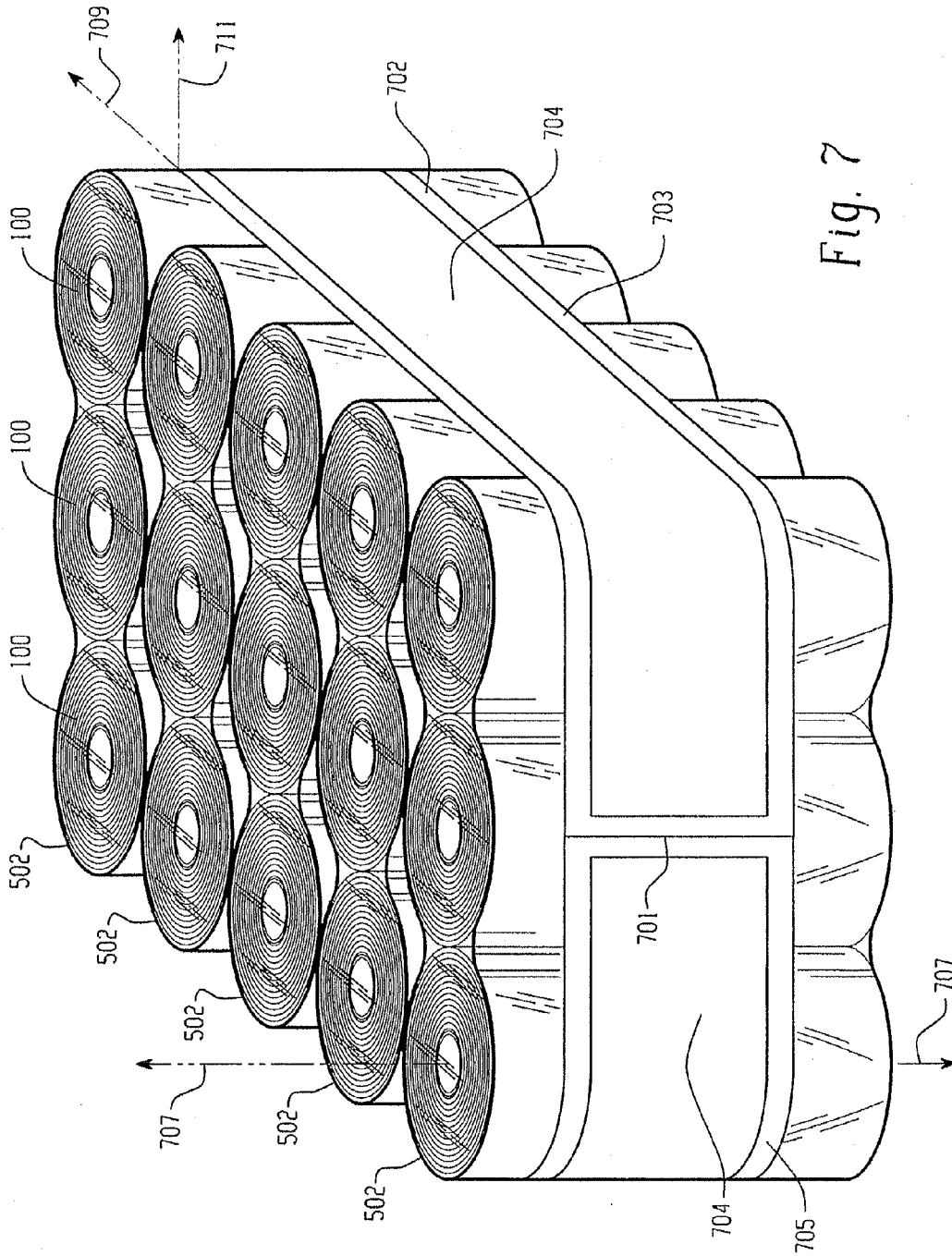


Fig. 7

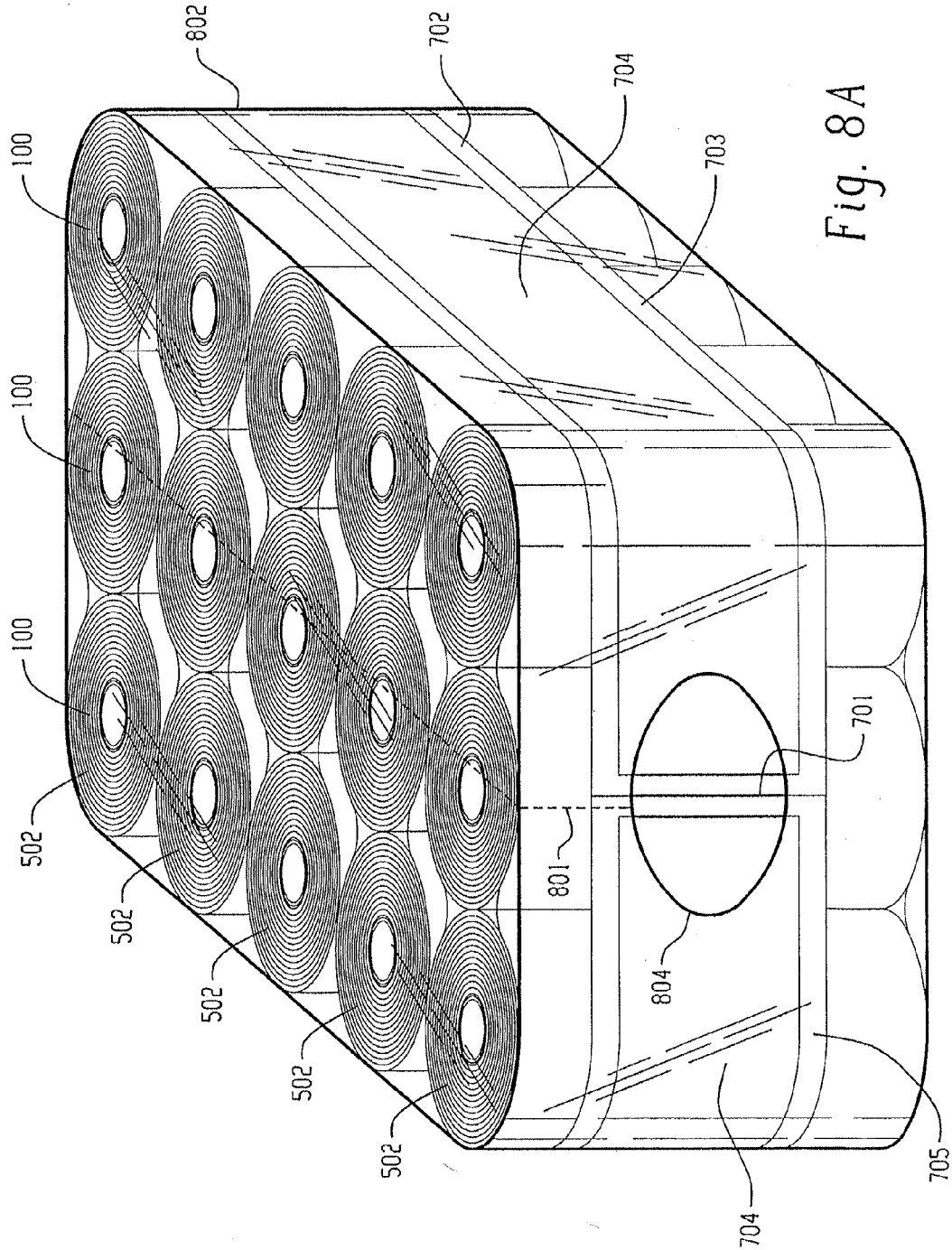


Fig. 8A

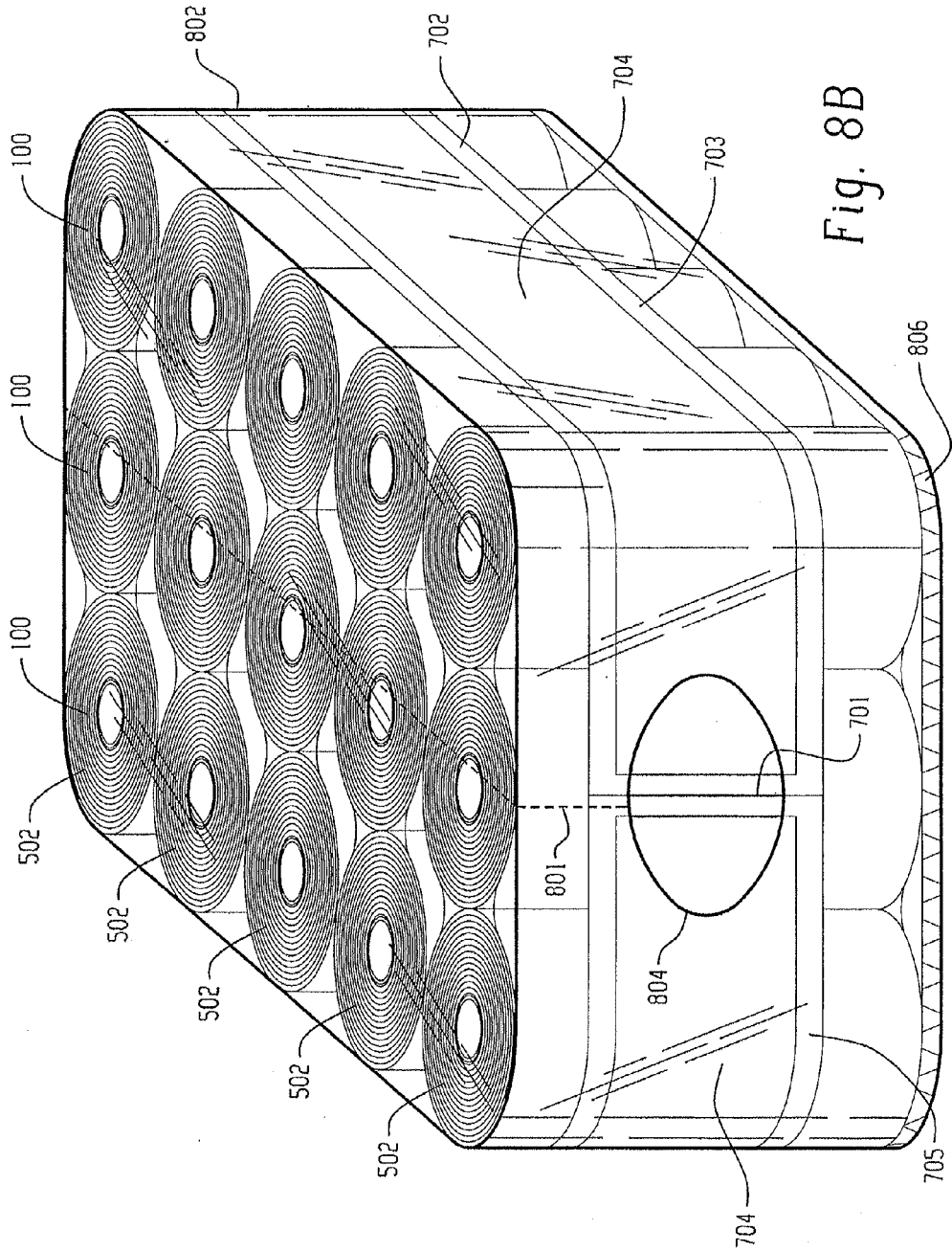


Fig. 8B

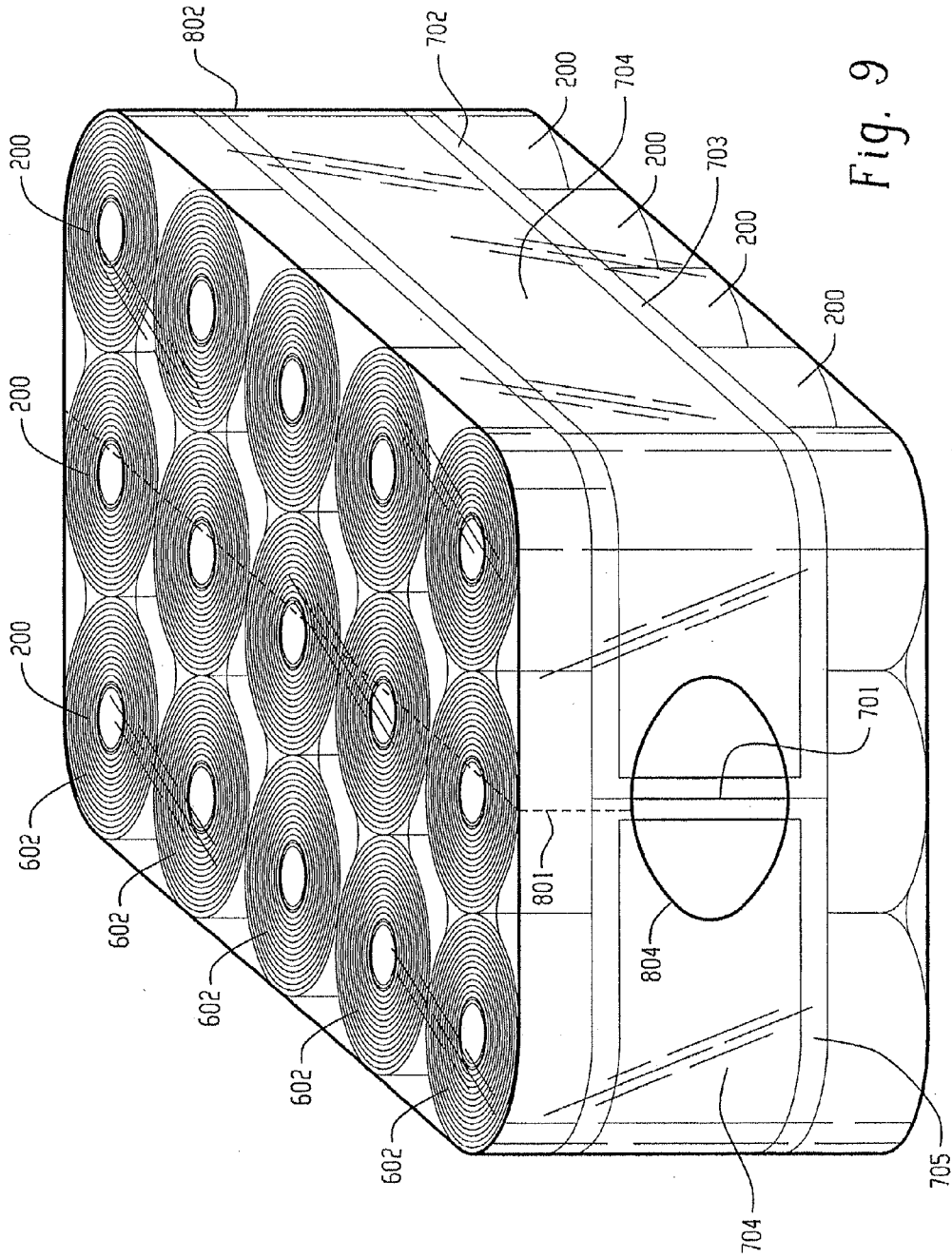


Fig. 9

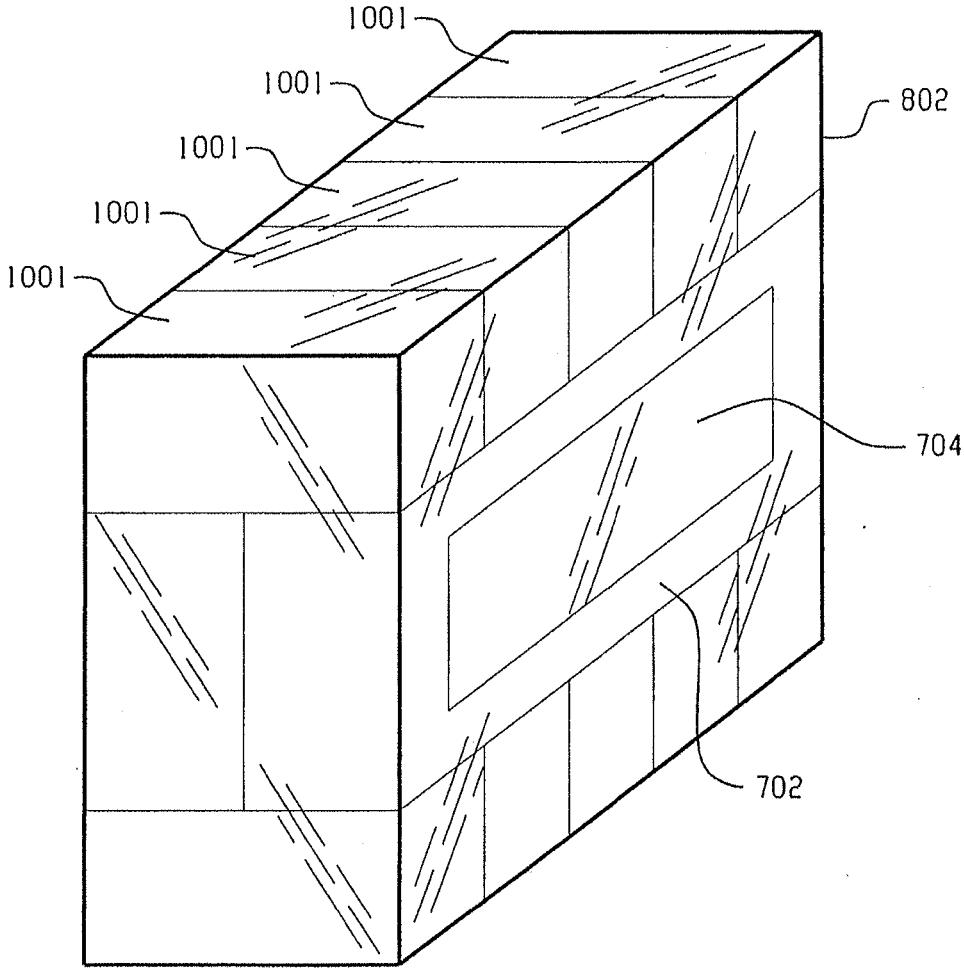


Fig. 10

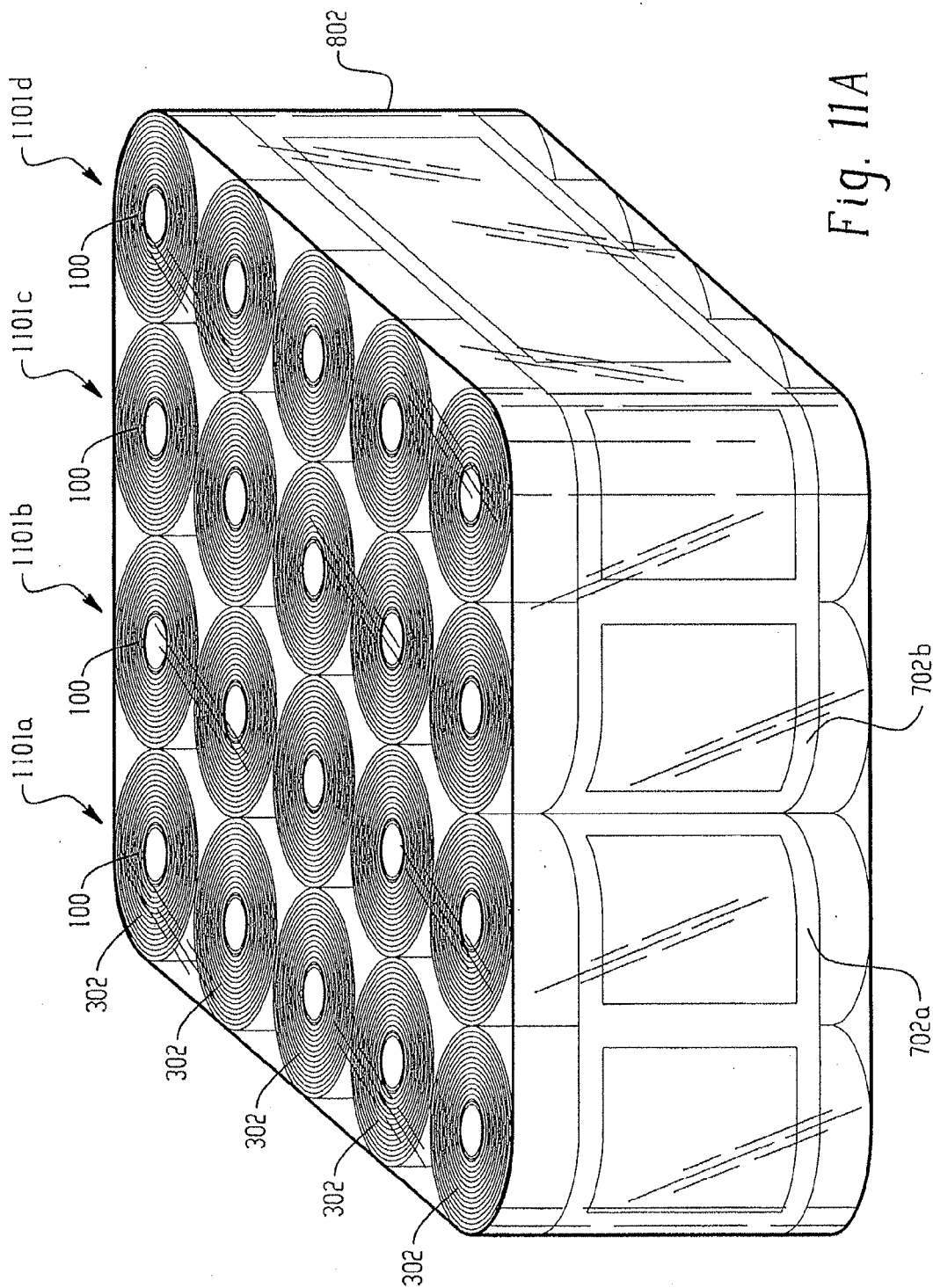


Fig. 11A

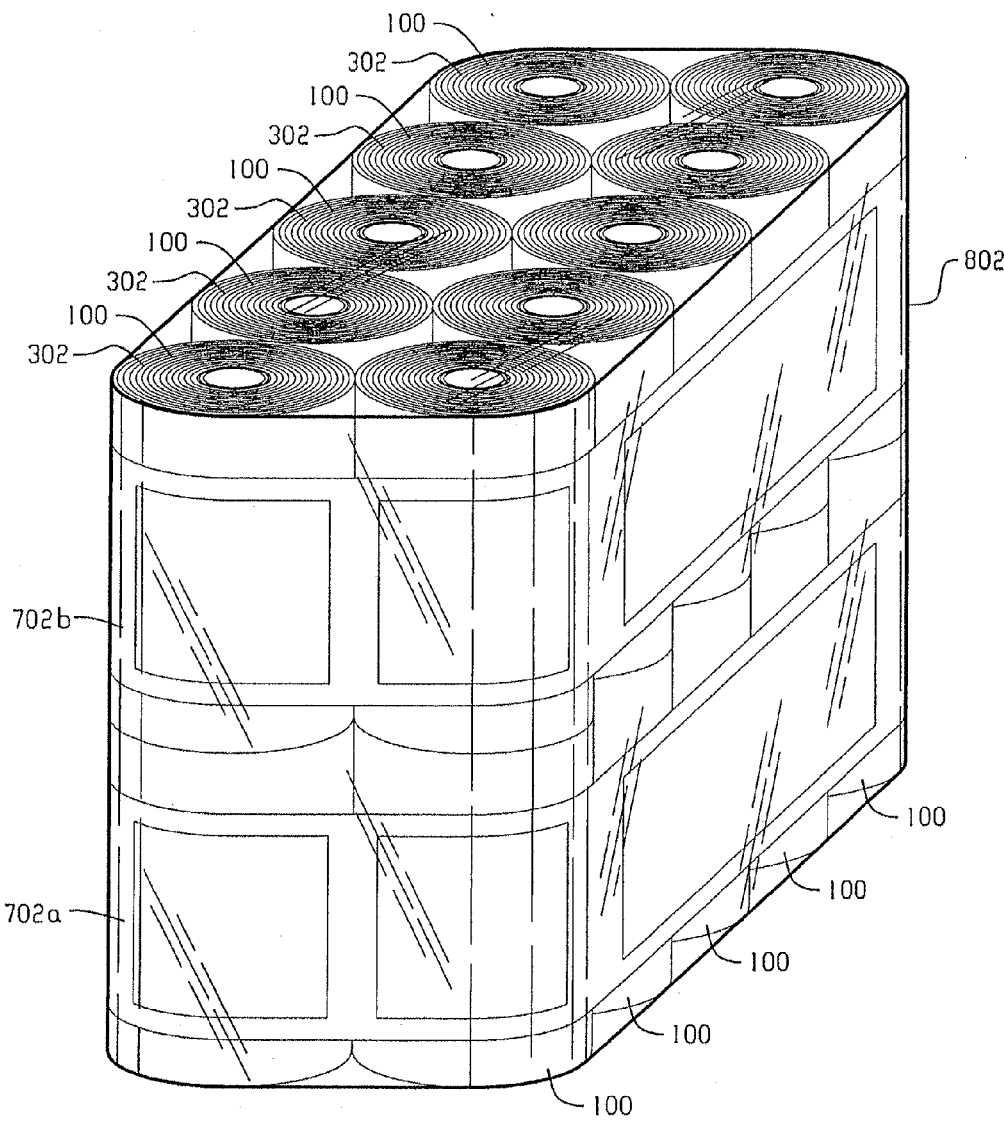


Fig. 11B

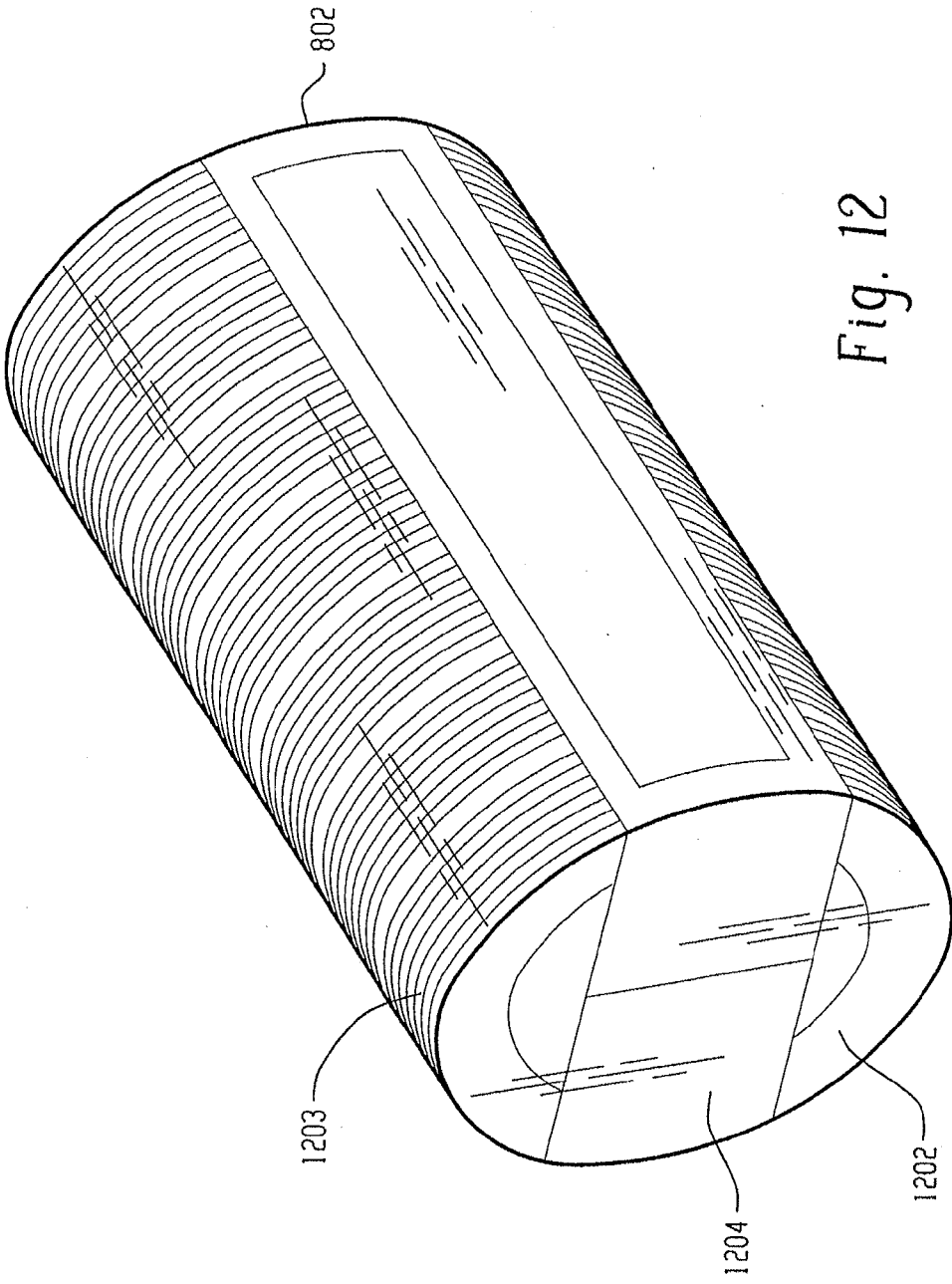


Fig. 12

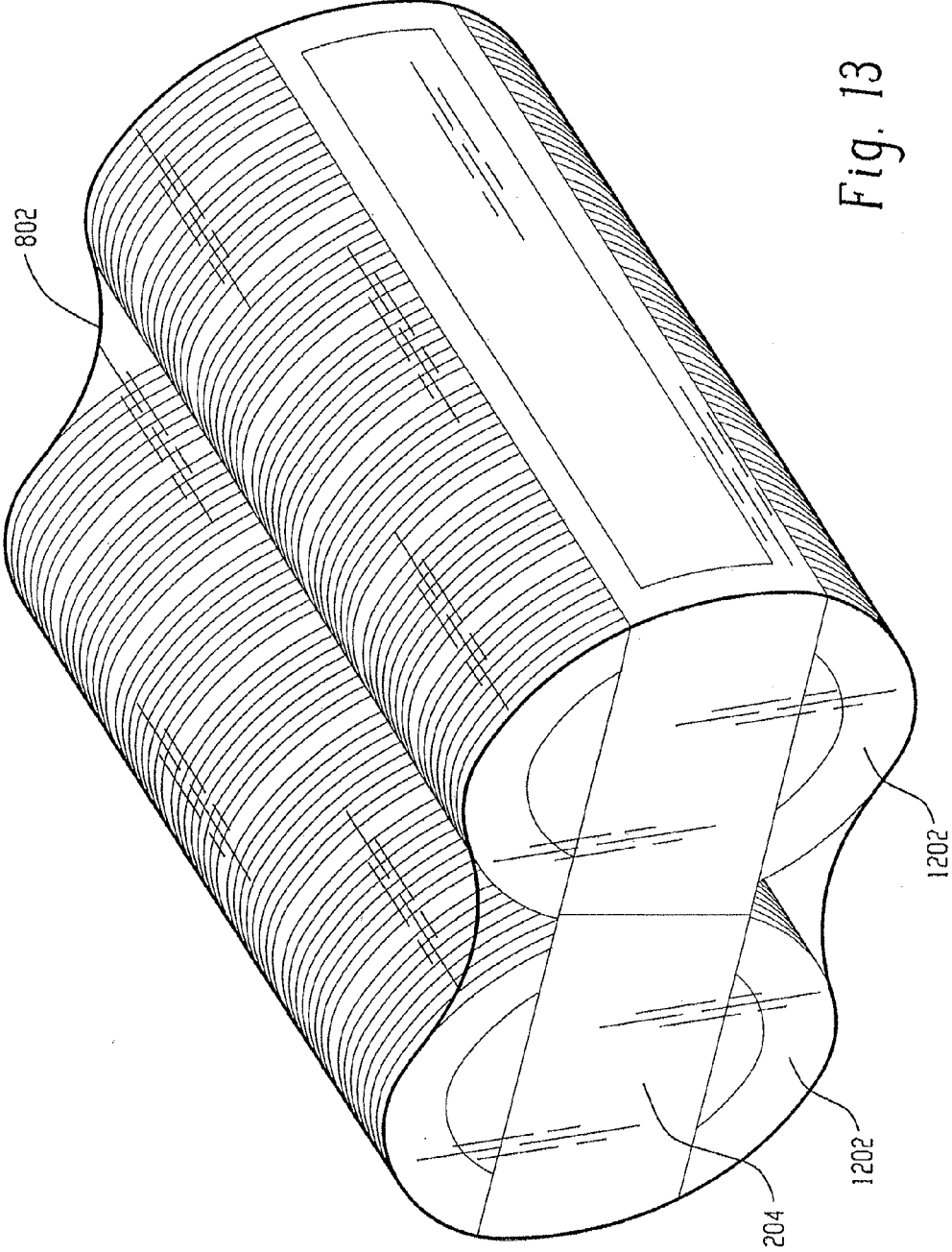


Fig. 13

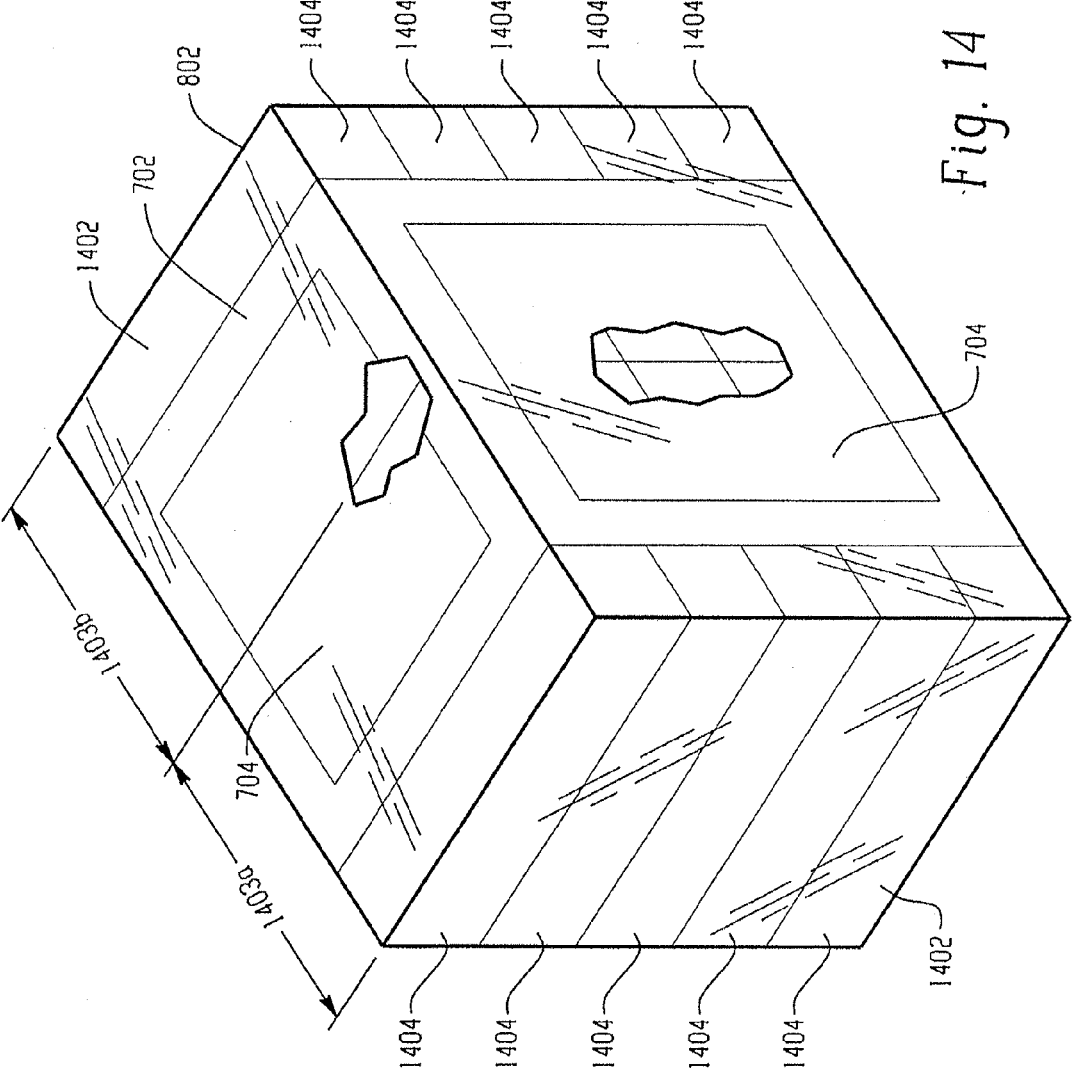


Fig. 14

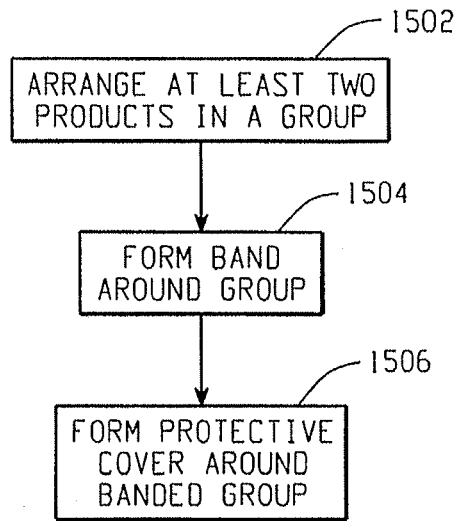


Fig. 15

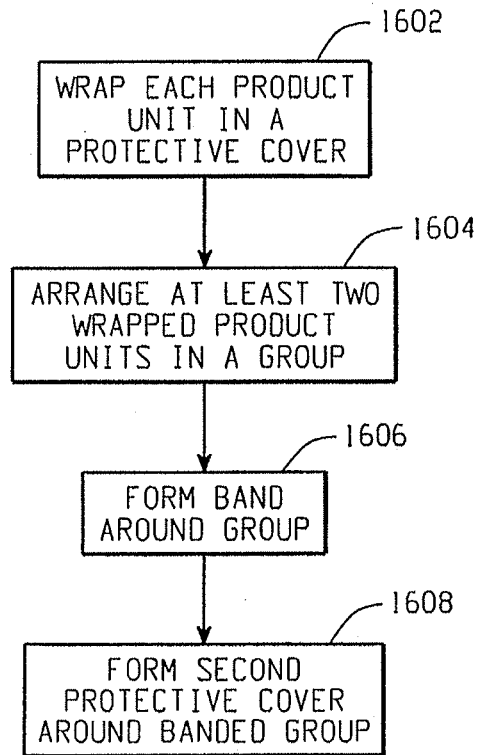


Fig. 16

**METHODS OF PACKAGING PRODUCTS
AND PACKAGING ARRANGEMENTS USING
A SHRINKABLE PROTECTIVE COVER TO
KEEP A GRAPHIC ON A BAND FORMED,
INTACT, AND VISIBLE**

CLAIM FOR PRIORITY

[0001] This application is a continuation application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/615,718, filed on Sep. 14, 2012, which is a continuation of U.S. patent and application Ser. No. 13/279,758, filed on Oct. 24, 2011, and published on Sep. 20, 2012, as U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2012/0234712 A1. U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/279,758 is based upon U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/410,135, filed Nov. 4, 2010. The priorities of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/410,135, U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/279,758, and U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/615,718 are hereby claimed and the disclosures thereof are incorporated into this application by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The subject matter disclosed herein relates to packaging goods. Previous packaging methods included using corrugated boxes or containers to package consumer goods. For example, a plurality of consumer goods may be packaged in a corrugated container fabricated from corrugated sheet products for shipping to a retailer and storage in inventory. The container consumes valuable material, energy, and personnel resources. In use, the consumer goods are placed on shelves, and the shipping container is discarded or recycled.

[0003] A packaging method and apparatus that reduces the use of corrugated containers is desired.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0004] In one aspect of the invention, a method of packaging a product includes wrapping at least a first product unit in a first protective cover, the first product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core, such that the first protective cover envelops the first product unit and creates at least a first wrapped first product unit, wrapping at least a second product unit in a second protective cover, the second product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core, such that the second protective cover envelops the second product unit and creates at least a second wrapped second product unit, arranging the at least a first wrapped first product unit adjacent to the at least a second wrapped second product unit to create a product unit arrangement, forming a band circumferentially around the product unit arrangement to create a secured product unit arrangement, the band being printed with at least one graphic prior to the forming of the singular band, wrapping the secured product unit arrangement in a protective wrapper to create a wrapped, secured product unit arrangement, the protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first product unit and the at least a second product unit of the secured product unit arrangement, and heating the protective wrapper to shrink the protective wrapper around the secured product unit arrangement, wherein the heating of the protective wrapper shrinks the protective wrapper without shrinking or deforming the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains

formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper. The first protective cover of the at least a first product unit, the second protective cover of the at least a second product unit, the band, and the protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

[0005] In another aspect of the present invention, a packaging arrangement includes at least a first entirely wrapped first product unit including at least a first product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core and being enveloped in a first protective cover, at least a second entirely wrapped second product unit (a) including at least a second product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core and being enveloped in a second protective cover and (b) being disposed adjacent to the at least a first wrapped first product unit, a band disposed circumferentially around the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit to create a secured product unit arrangement, the band being printed with at least one graphic, and a shrinkable protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit of the secured product unit arrangement to create a wrapped, secured product unit arrangement, wherein shrinking the shrinkable protective wrapper of the wrapped, secured product unit arrangement does not shrink or deform the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper upon shrinking. The first protective cover of the at least a first product unit, the second protective cover of the at least a second product unit, the band, and the shrinkable protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

[0006] In yet another aspect of the present invention, a packaging arrangement includes at least a first entirely wrapped first group of rolled sheet products including at least a first group of rolled sheet products enveloped in a first protective cover, the at least a first group including at least two rolls of sheet products that each have a cylindrical core, at least a second entirely wrapped second group of rolled sheet products including at least a second group of rolled sheet products enveloped in a second protective cover, the at least a second group including at least two rolls of sheet products that each have a cylindrical core, a band disposed circumferentially around the at least a first wrapped first group and the at least a second wrapped second group to create a secured arrangement of rolled sheet products, the band being printed with at least one graphic, and a shrinkable protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first wrapped first group and the at least a second wrapped second group of the secured arrangement of rolled sheet products, to create a wrapped, secured arrangement of rolled sheet products, wherein shrinking the shrinkable protective wrapper of the wrapped, secured arrangement of rolled sheet products does not shrink or deform the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper upon shrinking. The first protective cover of the at least a first group of rolled sheet products, the second protective cover of the at least a second group of rolled sheet products, the band, and the shrinkable protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

[0007] These and other advantages and features will become more apparent from the following description taken in conjunction with the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] The subject matter, which is regarded as the invention, is particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed in the claims at the conclusion of the specification. The foregoing and other features, and advantages of the invention are apparent from the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

[0009] FIG. 1 illustrates an example of a roll of sheet product.

[0010] FIG. 2 illustrates another example of rolls of sheet products.

[0011] FIG. 3 illustrates an example of a roll of sheet product that has been wrapped in a protective cover.

[0012] FIG. 4 illustrates an example of rolls of sheet products that are individually wrapped in a protective cover.

[0013] FIG. 5 illustrates an arrangement of rolls.

[0014] FIG. 6 illustrates an alternate arrangement of the rolls.

[0015] FIG. 7 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of rolls that has been secured by a band.

[0016] FIG. 8A illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the arrangement of the rolls shown in FIG. 7 that has been wrapped in a wrapper.

[0017] FIG. 8B illustrates an alternate exemplary embodiment of the arrangement of the rolls shown in FIG. 7 that has been wrapped in a wrapper.

[0018] FIG. 9 illustrates an alternate arrangement of the rolls.

[0019] FIG. 10 illustrates an alternate exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of products.

[0020] FIG. 11A illustrates an alternate exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of rolls.

[0021] FIG. 11B illustrates another exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of rolls.

[0022] FIG. 12 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of plate products.

[0023] FIG. 13 illustrates another exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of plate products.

[0024] FIG. 14 illustrates another exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of sheet products.

[0025] FIG. 15 illustrates a block diagram of an exemplary method of packaging products.

[0026] FIG. 16 illustrates a block diagram of an alternate exemplary method of packaging products.

[0027] The detailed description explains embodiments of the invention, together with advantages and features, by way of example with reference to the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0028] Previous packaging methods included disposing a plurality of products in a shipping container such as, for example, a corrugated box or shipping carton. The shipping container consumed material and energy resources. The exemplary methods and apparatus described below include embodiments that allow a plurality of products to be shipped and stored without the use of a shipping carton.

[0029] The term “sheet products” as used herein is inclusive of natural and/or synthetic cloth or paper sheets. Sheet products may include both woven and non-woven articles. There is a wide variety of nonwoven processes and these processes can be either wetlaid or drylaid. Some examples include hydroentangled (sometimes called spunlace), DRC

(double re-creped), airlaid, spunbond, carded, paper towel, and meltblown sheet products. Further, sheet products may contain fibrous cellulosic materials that may be derived from natural sources, such as wood pulp fibers, as well as other fibrous material characterized by having hydroxyl groups attached to the polymer backbone. These include glass fibers and synthetic fibers modified with hydroxyl groups. Examples of sheet products include, but are not limited to, wipers, napkins, tissues, rolls, towels or other fibrous, film, polymer, or filamentary products.

[0030] In general, sheet products are thin in comparison to their length and breadth and exhibit a relatively flat planar configuration and are flexible to permit folding, rolling, stacking, and the like. The sheet product may have perforations extending in lines across its width to separate individual sheets and to facilitate separation or tearing of individual sheets from a roll or folded arrangement at discrete intervals. Individual sheets may be sized as desired to accommodate the many uses of the sheet products. For example, perforation lines may be formed every thirteen inches, or other defined interval, to define a universally sized sheet. Multiple perforation lines may be provided to allow the user to select the size of the sheet depending on the particular need.

[0031] FIG. 1 illustrates an example of a roll sheet product (roll) 100. The roll of sheet product 100 may include a cylindrical core in the center of the roll 100. Alternate embodiments, however, may not necessarily include a cylindrical core. FIG. 2 illustrates another example of rolls of sheet products 200. The rolls 200 have a shorter cylindrical height than the roll 1100 and are arranged stacked on-end.

[0032] FIG. 3 illustrates an example of the roll 100 (of FIG. 1) that has been wrapped in a protective cover 302. The protective cover 302 envelopes the roll 100. The protective cover 302 may be formed from any suitable material such as, for example, a plastic or a fibrous sheet product. The protective cover 302 may be transparent, translucent, or opaque and may include graphics or text printed on the protective cover 302. FIG. 4 illustrates an example of the rolls 200 (of FIG. 2) that are individually wrapped in a protective cover 402. The protective cover 402 is similar to the protective cover 302 (of FIG. 3) described above.

[0033] FIG. 5 illustrates an arrangement of the rolls 100 (of FIG. 1). In this regard, three rolls 100 are arranged in-line and are packaged in a protective cover 502. In the illustrated embodiment, the protected cover 502 may be fabricated from, for example, a plastic or a fibrous sheet material that may be transparent, translucent, or opaque. In an alternative embodiment, the wrapped arrangement of the roll 100 that includes the protective cover 302 (of FIG. 3) may be incorporated into the illustrated embodiment of FIG. 5 such that each roll 100 may be individually wrapped in a protective cover 302. The wrapped rolls 100 may then be arranged in-line and subsequently wrapped in the protective cover 502.

[0034] FIG. 6 illustrates an arrangement of the rolls 200 (of FIG. 2) that are stacked on-end and arranged in-line in a similar manner as the rolls 100 of FIG. 5. The illustrated arrangement of the rolls 200 is wrapped in a protective cover 602 that is similar to the protective cover 502 (of FIG. 5). In an alternate exemplary embodiment, the rolls 200 may be individually wrapped in the protective cover 402 (of FIG. 4) prior to wrapping the rolls 200 in the protective cover 602.

[0035] FIG. 7 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of rolls 100 that have been secured by a band 702. In the illustrated embodiment, the rolls 100 have been arranged and wrapped in a similar manner as that of the rolls 100 of FIG. 5, described above. Thus, the rolls 100 have been arranged in-line and wrapped in groups of three rolls. Five of the groups of rolls 100 are arranged and secured by the band 702. The band 702 may be formed from, for example, a plastic material that may have elastic properties. The band 702 exerts a compressive force on the arrangement of rolls 100, securing the rolls 100 in the illustrated arrangement. In the illustrated embodiment, an example of a longitudinal axis of the rolls 100 is shown by the line 707, and edges of the band 702 define a plane illustrated by the lines 709 and 711. The band 702 is arranged circumferentially about the rolls 100, such that the plane defined by the lines 709 and 711 is arranged substantially orthogonal to a longitudinal axis of the roll 100 (shown by the line 707). In the illustrated embodiment, the band 702 is formed from two rectangular strips 703 and 705 of material that are connected together at opposing seams 701 (only one seam is shown in FIG. 7, the other seam being hidden from view on the opposite side of the arrangement of rolls), using a connecting process such as, for example, a plastic heating, welding, or bonding process. In alternate embodiments, the band 702 may be formed from a single strip having opposing ends connected together with a single seam 701. The material that forms the band 702 may be printed with graphic or textual markings in, for example, the regions 704 prior to forming the band 702. The process used to connect the strips 703 and 705 of material is operative to form the seams 701 without appreciably deforming the band 702 (except, in some embodiments, in the regions proximate to the seams 701). Thus, the connecting process does not deform the regions 704 that may include graphical, opaque regions, or textual markings in the regions 704. The process may also index the orientation of the strips 703 and 705 such that the arrangement of the regions 704 remains uniform as subsequent bands 702 are formed in mass production. Though the illustrated embodiment includes five groups of three rolls 100, alternate arrangements may include, for example, any number of groups of three rolls 100 or any number of groups of rolls 100 having any number of rolls 100 per group. The dimensions and shape of the regions 704 of the illustrated embodiment are shown for illustrative purposes. The regions 704 may be any shape or size including covering any or all areas of the band 702.

[0036] FIG. 8A illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the arrangement of rolls 100 (shown in FIG. 7) above that has been wrapped in a wrapper 802. The wrapper 802 envelopes the rolls 100 and the band 702. The wrapper 802 is formed from a plastic material that may be heated to shrink the wrapper 802 around the rolls 100 and the band 702. The wrapper 702 may be formed from, for example, a tubular shaped plastic material that is arranged about the rolls 100 and the band 702. The wrapper 802 may be transparent or translucent and may, or may not, include graphic or textual markings printed on the wrapper 802. If a heating process is used to shrink the wrapper 802, the heating process shrinks the wrapper 802, without appreciably shrinking or deforming the band 702. Thus, the graphical and textual markings on the band 702 remain formed and intact, and may be legible and visible through a transparent wrapper 802. The shrinking of the wrapper 802 in the

illustrated embodiment forms orifices 804 that may expose portions of the band 702. In the illustrated embodiment, although a single orifice 804 is shown, however, another orifice 804 has been formed on the opposing side of the arrangement (now shown in FIG. 8A). The orifice 804 may aid in allowing heat to dissipate from the heating process (that shrinks the wrapper 802). The dissipation of the heat via the orifice 804 reduces the possibility of undesirably deforming the band 702 while shrinking the wrapper 802. The illustrated embodiment includes a line of perforations 801 that may be formed to assist a user in manually removing the wrapper 802 without using a cutting tool, for example. In the illustrated embodiment, the line of perforations 801 intersects the orifice 804. In alternate embodiments, however, the line of perforations 801 may be arranged in any suitable manner.

[0037] The wrapper 802 may be formed from a material having desirable friction properties, for example, to increase the ease in handling a packaged product. In this regard, the wrapped product may be handled in a variety of automated or semi-automated systems, such as conveyor belts, shoots, and rollers. A plurality of packaged products may be grouped together and moved using gripping type lift devices. It is desirable for the wrapper 802 to have a surface with a coefficient of friction that meets design parameters, for example, to allow motive rollers to propel a package or a lift device to grip multiple packages with less slippage between packages than a wrapper 802 having a lower coefficient of friction.

[0038] FIG. 8B illustrates an alternate exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of rolls 100. In this regard, the rolls 100 are arranged and secured by the band 702. The banded rolls 100 are disposed on a rigid or a semi-rigid sheet or a pad 806 that may include, for example, a corrugated material. The wrapper 802 is formed around the rolls 100, the band 702, and the pad 806 in a similar manner as discussed above. The pad 806 or a similar arrangement may be included in any of the discussed embodiments.

[0039] FIG. 9 illustrates an arrangement of the rolls 200 that is similar to the arrangement of rolls illustrated in FIG. 8A. In this regard, the rolls 200 are stacked on-end, grouped and wrapped in a wrapper 602, as shown in FIG. 6. The rolls 200 are grouped as illustrated, secured by a band 702, and wrapped in a wrapper 802.

[0040] FIG. 10 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of products 1001 that are rectangularly prism-shaped and secured by a band 702, and wrapped in a wrapper 802 in a similar manner as described above. Though the illustrated embodiments include cylindrical and rectangularly prism-shaped products, the methods and embodiments described above may be used for products having any variety of shapes. In one embodiment, each product 1001 is a stack of paper napkins oriented such that the band 702 wraps around outer surfaces of the arrangements of products 1001 to securely hold the arrangement.

[0041] FIG. 11A illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of rolls 100 that are individually wrapped in a protective cover 302, as described above in FIG. 3. The rolls 100 are arranged in rows 1101a to 1101d. The rows 1101a and 1101b are secured by a band 702a and the rows 1101c and 1101d are secured by a band 702b. The banded products are arranged adjacent to each other and wrapped in a wrapper 802 in a similar manner as described above.

[0042] FIG. 11B illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of rolls 100 that are individually wrapped in a protective cover 302, as described above in FIG. 3. The rolls 100 are arranged in rows and secured by bands 702a and 702b in a similar manner as discussed above in FIG. 11A. The rows secured by the band 702b are stacked onto the rows secured by the band 702a. The stacked rolls are wrapped in a wrapper 802 in a similar manner as described above.

[0043] FIG. 12 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of tableware products 1202. The tableware products 1202 may include, for example, paper, plastic, foam, or an alternate material formed in the shape of a plate, a bowl, a platter, a tray, or other type of tableware. The tableware products 1202 are packaged in groups that are wrapped in protective covers 1203. A band 1204 that is similar to the band 702 (of FIG. 7) secures the arrangement of the tableware products 1202. The arrangement of tableware products 1202, and the band 1204, are wrapped in a wrapper 802 in a similar manner as described above.

[0044] FIG. 13 illustrates another exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of tableware products 1202. The tableware products 1202 are arranged in two rows. The band 1204 secures the arrangement of the tableware products 1202. The arrangement of tableware products 1202 and the band 1204 are wrapped in a wrapper 802 in a similar manner as described above.

[0045] FIG. 13 illustrates another exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of tableware products 1202. The tableware products 1202 are arranged in two rows. The band 1204 secures the arrangement of the tableware products 1202. The arrangement of tableware products 1202 and the band 1204 are wrapped in a wrapper 802 in a similar manner as described above.

[0046] FIG. 14 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of an arrangement of sheet products that may include, for example, stacked sheets of paper packaged in a paper or plastic protective cover 1402, resulting in a rectangularly prism-shaped product package 1404. The packages 1404 are arranged in two stacks 1403a and 1403b that are secured by a band 702 and wrapped in a wrapper 802 in a similar manner as described above.

[0047] FIG. 15 illustrates a block diagram of an exemplary method of packaging products such as, for example, rolls of sheet products similar to the rolls 100 and 200 described above. In this regard, in block 1502, at least two products are arranged in a group. A band similar to the band 702 (of FIG. 7) is formed around the group in block 1504. In block 1506, a wrapper similar to the wrapper 802 (of FIG. 8A) is formed around the banded group. The formation of the protective cover may include, for example, applying heat to the protective cover to reduce the surface area of the protective cover (i.e., to shrink the protective cover via a shrink-wrap process) and forming a line of perforations similar to the line 801 (of FIG. 8A).

[0048] FIG. 16 illustrates a block diagram of an alternate exemplary method of packaging products such as, for example, rolls of sheet products similar to the rolls 100 and 200 described above. In this regard, in block 1602, each product unit is wrapped in a protective cover. A product unit may include one or more products such as, for example, an individual roll 100 (of FIG. 3) that is wrapped in the protective cover 302, or an arrangement of rolls similar to the arrangement of FIG. 5, with a plurality of rolls 100

wrapped in a protective cover 502. In block 1604, at least two wrapped product units are arranged in a group. A band similar to the band 702 (of FIG. 7) is formed around the group in block 1606.

[0049] In block 1608, a second protective cover (similar to the wrapper 802 of FIG. 8A) is formed around the banded group. The formation of the second protective cover may include, for example, applying heat to the second protective cover to reduce the surface area of the second protective cover (i.e., to shrink the second protective cover) and forming a line of perforations similar to the line 801 (of FIG. 8A).

[0050] Though the embodiments described above include a variety of packaged products, a variety of other products may be packaged in similar manners as described above. For example, canned food stuffs or other types of products having different shapes or characteristics may be packaged as described above.

[0051] While the invention has been described in detail in connection with only a limited number of embodiments, it should be readily understood that the invention is not limited to such disclosed embodiments. Rather, the invention can be modified to incorporate any number of variations, alterations, substitutions or equivalent arrangements not heretofore described, but which are commensurate with the scope and spirit of the invention. Additionally, while various embodiments of the invention have been described, it is to be understood that aspects of the invention may include only some of the described embodiments. Accordingly, the invention is not to be seen as limited by the foregoing description, but is only limited by the scope of the appended claims.

We claim:

1. A method of packaging a product, the method comprising:
 - (A) wrapping at least a first product unit in a first protective cover, the first product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core, such that the first protective cover completely envelops the first product unit and creates at least a first wrapped first product unit;
 - (B) wrapping at least a second product unit in a second protective cover, the second product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core, such that the second protective cover completely envelops the second product unit and creates at least a second wrapped second product unit;
 - (C) arranging the at least a first wrapped first product unit adjacent to the at least a second wrapped second product unit to create a product unit arrangement;
 - (D) forming a band circumferentially around the product unit arrangement to create a secured product unit arrangement, the band being printed with at least one graphic prior to the forming of the singular band;
 - (E) wrapping the secured product unit arrangement in a protective wrapper to create a wrapped, secured product unit arrangement, the protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first product unit and the at least a second product unit of the secured product unit arrangement; and
 - (F) heating the protective wrapper to shrink the protective wrapper around the secured product unit arrangement, wherein the heating of the protective wrapper shrinks the protective wrapper without shrinking or deforming

the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper,

wherein the first protective cover of the at least a first product unit, the second protective cover of the at least a second product unit, the band, and the protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the heating of the protective wrapper reduces the surface area of the protective wrapper.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the band exerts a compressive force on the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the protective wrapper is formed from a transparent material.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the band defines a continuous strip of material.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of forming the band includes:

- (a) connecting a first end of a first segment of material to a first end of a second segment of material;
- (b) disposing the first segment of material around a portion of the arrangement of the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit, and the second segment of material around an opposing portion of the arrangement of the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit; and
- (c) connecting a second end of the first segment of material to a second end of the second segment of material.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein a compressive force is exerted by the first segment of material and the second segment of material on the product unit arrangement of the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit, prior to connecting the second end of the first segment of material to the second end of the second segment of material.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the at least one graphic is printed on at least the first segment of material prior to forming the band.

9. The method of claim 6, wherein the at least one graphic is printed on at least the second segment of material prior to forming the band.

10. The method of claim 6, further comprising:

- (G) forming a first graphic on at least the first segment of material prior to forming the band;
- (H) forming a second graphic on at least the second segment of material prior to forming the band; and
- (I) aligning the first graphic with the second graphic prior to connecting the first end of the first segment of material to the first end of the second segment of material.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of forming the band includes:

- (a) disposing a segment of material around the product unit arrangement of the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit; and
- (b) connecting a first end of the segment of material to a second end of the segment of material.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the at least one graphic is printed on a portion of the segment of material prior to forming the band.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the protective wrapper includes a line of perforations in the protective wrapper.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the protective wrapper includes at least one orifice defined by the protective wrapper.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least a first product unit and the at least a second product unit include similar products.

16. A method of packaging a product, the method comprising:

- (A) wrapping at least a first product unit in a first protective cover, the first product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core, such that the first protective cover envelops the first product unit and creates at least a first wrapped first product unit;
- (B) wrapping at least a second product unit in a second protective cover, the second product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core, such that the second protective cover envelops the second product unit and creates at least a second wrapped second product unit;
- (C) arranging the at least a first wrapped first product unit adjacent to the at least a second wrapped second product unit to create a product unit arrangement;
- (D) forming a band circumferentially around the product unit arrangement to create a secured product unit arrangement, the band being printed with at least one graphic prior to the forming of the singular band;
- (E) wrapping the secured product unit arrangement in a protective wrapper to create a wrapped, secured product unit arrangement, the protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first product unit and the at least a second product unit of the secured product unit arrangement; and
- (F) heating the protective wrapper to shrink the protective wrapper around the secured product unit arrangement, wherein the heating of the protective wrapper shrinks the protective wrapper without shrinking or deforming the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper,

wherein the first protective cover of the at least a first product unit, the second protective cover of the at least a second product unit, the band, and the protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the heating of the protective wrapper reduces the surface area of the protective wrapper.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the band exerts a compressive force on the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein the protective wrapper is formed from a transparent material.

20. The method of claim 16, wherein the band defines a continuous strip of material.

21. The method of claim 16, wherein the step of forming the band includes:

- (a) connecting a first end of a first segment of material to a first end of a second segment of material;
- (b) disposing the first segment of material around a portion of the arrangement of the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit, and the second segment of material around an opposing portion of the arrangement of

the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit; and

- (c) connecting a second end of the first segment of material to a second end of the second segment of material.

22. The method of claim **21**, wherein a compressive force is exerted by the first segment of material and the second segment of material on the product unit arrangement of the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit, prior to connecting the second end of the first segment of material to the second end of the second segment of material.

23. The method of claim **21**, wherein the at least one graphic is printed on at least the first segment of material prior to forming the band.

24. The method of claim **21**, wherein the at least one graphic is printed on at least the second segment of material prior to forming the band.

25. The method of claim **21**, further comprising:

- (G) forming a first graphic on at least the first segment of material prior to forming the band;
- (H) forming a second graphic on at least the second segment of material prior to forming the band; and
- (I) aligning the first graphic with the second graphic prior to connecting the first end of the first segment of material to the first end of the second segment of material.

26. The method of claim **16**, wherein the step of forming the band includes:

- (a) disposing a segment of material around the product unit arrangement of the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit; and
- (b) connecting a first end of the segment of material to a second end of the segment of material.

27. The method of claim **26**, wherein the at least one graphic is printed on a portion of the segment of material prior to forming the band.

28. The method of claim **16**, wherein the protective wrapper includes a line of perforations in the protective wrapper.

29. The method of claim **16**, wherein the protective wrapper includes at least one orifice defined by the protective wrapper.

30. The method of claim **16**, wherein the at least a first product unit and the at least a second product unit include similar products.

31. A packaging arrangement comprising:

- (A) at least a first entirely wrapped first product unit including at least a first product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core and being completely enveloped in a first protective cover;
- (B) at least a second entirely wrapped second product unit
 - (a) including at least a second product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core and being completely enveloped in a second protective cover and (b) being disposed adjacent to the at least a first wrapped first product unit;
- (C) a band disposed circumferentially around the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit to create a secured product unit arrangement, the band being printed with at least one graphic; and

- (D) a shrinkable protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit of the secured product unit arrangement to create a wrapped, secured product unit arrangement,

wherein shrinking the shrinkable protective wrapper of the wrapped, secured product unit arrangement does not shrink or deform the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper upon shrinking, and

wherein the first protective cover of the at least a first product unit, the second protective cover of the at least a second product unit, the band, and the shrinkable protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

32. The packaging arrangement of claim **31**, wherein the shrinkable protective wrapper includes at least one orifice defined by the shrinkable protective wrapper.

33. The packaging arrangement of claim **31**, wherein the band exerts a compressive force on the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit.

34. The packaging arrangement of claim **31**, wherein the protective wrapper is made from a transparent material.

35. The packaging arrangement of claim **31**, wherein the band defines a continuous strip of material.

36. The packaging arrangement of claim **31**, wherein the protective wrapper includes a line of perforations in the protective wrapper.

37. The packaging arrangement of claim **31**, wherein the at least a first product unit and the at least a second product unit include similar products.

38. A packaging arrangement comprising:

- (A) at least a first wrapped first product unit including at least a first product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core and being enveloped in a first protective cover;
 - (B) at least a second wrapped second product unit (a) including at least a second product unit comprising a rolled sheet product having a cylindrical core and being enveloped in a second protective cover and (b) being disposed adjacent to the at least a first wrapped first product unit;
 - (C) a band disposed circumferentially around the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit to create a secured product unit arrangement, the band being printed with at least one graphic; and
 - (D) a shrinkable protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit of the secured product unit arrangement to create a wrapped, secured product unit arrangement,
- wherein shrinking the shrinkable protective wrapper of the wrapped, secured product unit arrangement does not shrink or deform the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper upon shrinking, and
- wherein the first protective cover of the at least a first product unit, the second protective cover of the at least a second product unit, the band, and the shrinkable protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

39. The packaging arrangement of claim 38, wherein the shrinkable protective wrapper includes at least one orifice defined by the shrinkable protective wrapper.

40. The packaging arrangement of claim 38, wherein the band exerts a compressive force on the at least a first wrapped first product unit and the at least a second wrapped second product unit.

41. The packaging arrangement of claim 38, wherein the protective wrapper is made from a transparent material.

42. The packaging arrangement of claim 38, wherein the band defines a continuous strip of material.

43. The packaging arrangement of claim 38, wherein the protective wrapper includes a line of perforations in the protective wrapper.

44. The packaging arrangement of claim 38, wherein the at least a first product unit and the at least a second product unit include similar products.

45. A packaging arrangement comprising:

(A) at least a first entirely wrapped first group of rolled sheet products including at least a first group of rolled sheet products completely enveloped in a first protective cover, the at least a first group including at least two rolls of sheet products that each have a cylindrical core;

(B) at least a second entirely wrapped second group of rolled sheet products including at least a second group of rolled sheet products completely enveloped in a second protective cover, the at least a second group including at least two rolls of sheet products that each have a cylindrical core;

(C) a band disposed circumferentially around the at least a first wrapped first group and the at least a second wrapped second group to create a secured arrangement of rolled sheet products, the band being printed with at least one graphic; and

(D) a shrinkable protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first wrapped first group and the at least a second wrapped second group of the secured arrangement of rolled sheet products, to create a wrapped, secured arrangement of rolled sheet products,

wherein shrinking the shrinkable protective wrapper of the wrapped, secured arrangement of rolled sheet products does not shrink or deform the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper upon shrinking, and

wherein the first protective cover of the at least a first group of rolled sheet products, the second protective cover of the at least a second group of rolled sheet products, the band, and the shrinkable protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

46. The packaging arrangement of claim 45, wherein the protective wrapper includes at least one orifice defined by the protective wrapper, the orifice being operative to expose a portion of the band.

47. The packaging arrangement of claim 45, wherein the band exerts a compressive force on the at least a first wrapped first group and the at least a second wrapped second group.

48. The packaging arrangement of claim 45, wherein the protective wrapper includes a transparent material.

49. The packaging arrangement of claim 45, wherein the band defines a continuous strip of material.

50. The packaging arrangement of claim 45, wherein the protective wrapper includes a line of perforations in the protective wrapper.

51. A packaging arrangement comprising:

(A) at least a first entirely wrapped first group of rolled sheet products including at least a first group of rolled sheet products enveloped in a first protective cover, the at least a first group including at least two rolls of sheet products that each have a cylindrical core;

(B) at least a second entirely wrapped second group of rolled sheet products including at least a second group of rolled sheet products enveloped in a second protective cover, the at least a second group including at least two rolls of sheet products that each have a cylindrical core;

(C) a band disposed circumferentially around the at least a first wrapped first group and the at least a second wrapped second group to create a secured arrangement of rolled sheet products, the band being printed with at least one graphic; and

(D) a shrinkable protective wrapper enveloping at least a majority of the band, and the at least a first wrapped first group and the at least a second wrapped second group of the secured arrangement of rolled sheet products, to create a wrapped, secured arrangement of rolled sheet products,

wherein shrinking the shrinkable protective wrapper of the wrapped, secured arrangement of rolled sheet products does not shrink or deform the band, such that the at least one graphic on the band remains formed, intact, and visible through the protective wrapper upon shrinking, and

wherein the first protective cover of the at least a first group of rolled sheet products, the second protective cover of the at least a second group of rolled sheet products, the band, and the shrinkable protective wrapper each comprises a plastic material.

52. The packaging arrangement according to claim 51, wherein the protective wrapper includes at least one orifice defined by the protective wrapper, the orifice being operative to expose a portion of the band.

53. The packaging arrangement according to claim 51, wherein the band exerts a compressive force on the at least a first wrapped first group and the at least a second wrapped second group.

54. The packaging arrangement according to claim 51, wherein the protective wrapper includes a transparent material.

55. The packaging arrangement according to claim 51, wherein the band defines a continuous strip of material.

56. The packaging arrangement according to claim 51, wherein the protective wrapper includes a line of perforations in the protective wrapper.