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(54) **AIR CONDITIONING COMPRESSOR SOUND ATTENUATION**

(71) Applicant: **Rheem Manufacturing Company**, Atlanta, GA (US)

(72) Inventors: **Derek Brasuell**, Van Buren, AR (US); **Paul McKim**, Fort Smith, AR (US); **Rick Robbins**, Huntington, AR (US)

(73) Assignee: **Rheem Manufacturing Company**, Atlanta, GA (US)

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Related U.S. Application Data

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F24F 1/12 (2011.01)
F24F 13/24 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***F24F 1/12*** (2013.01); ***F24F 13/24*** (2013.01); *F04B 2201/0804* (2013.01); *F24F 2013/242* (2013.01); *F24F 2013/247* (2013.01); *F25B 2500/12* (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC F04B 2201/0804; F25B 2500/12; F24F 13/24; F24F 2013/242; F24F 2013/247; B29C 44/12; B29C 33/68; B29C 44/3415
See application file for complete search history.

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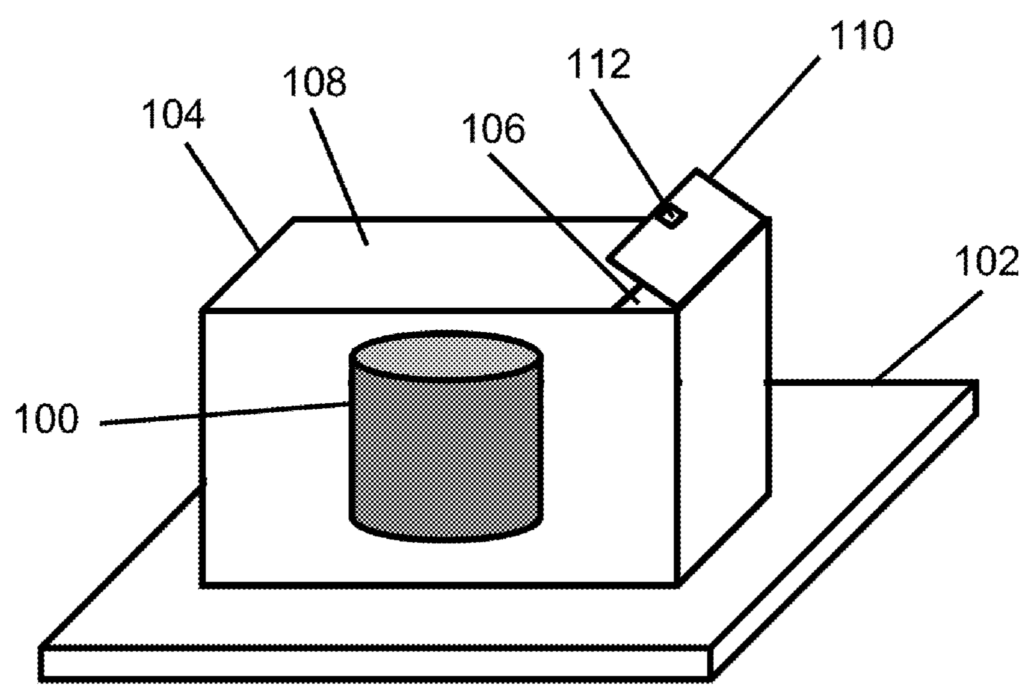
Primary Examiner — Connor J Tremarche
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Eversheds Sutherland (US) LLP

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A method of forming a sound attenuator around a compressor of an air conditioning system includes covering the compressor with a flexible protective cover and depositing a plurality of materials proximate an outer surface of the flexible protective cover such that at least some of the plurality of materials can chemically react to create a self-forming foam that abuts at least some of the flexible protective cover to thereby create the sound-attenuating structure around the compressor.

13 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



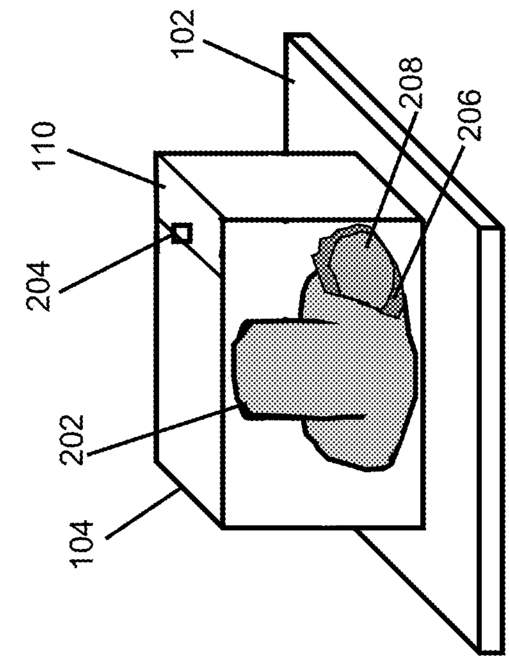


FIG. 2

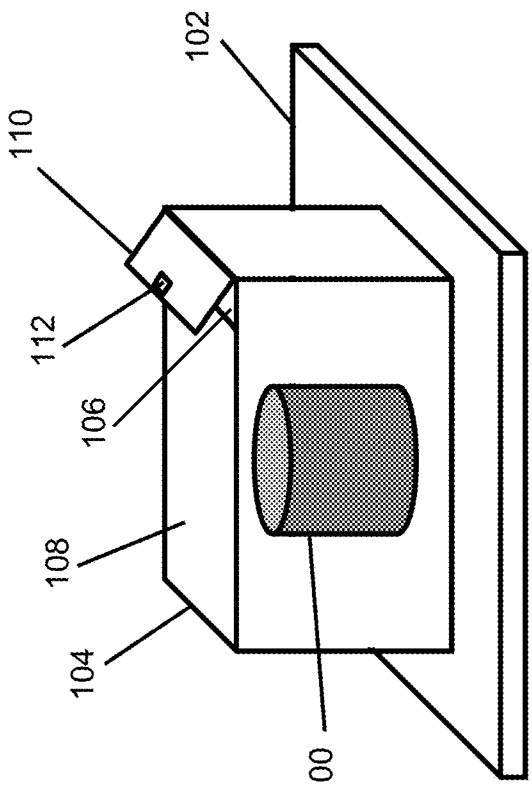


FIG. 1

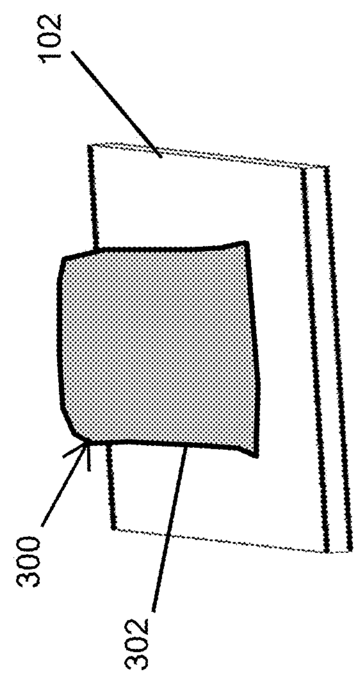


FIG. 3

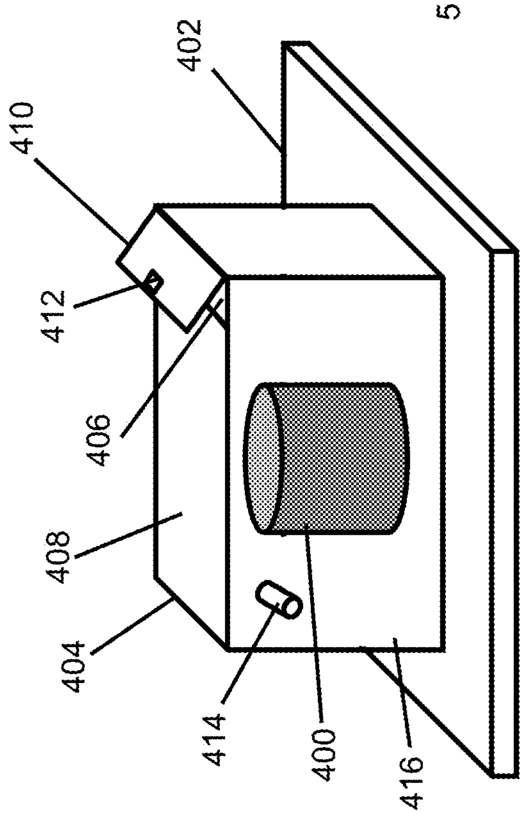


FIG. 4

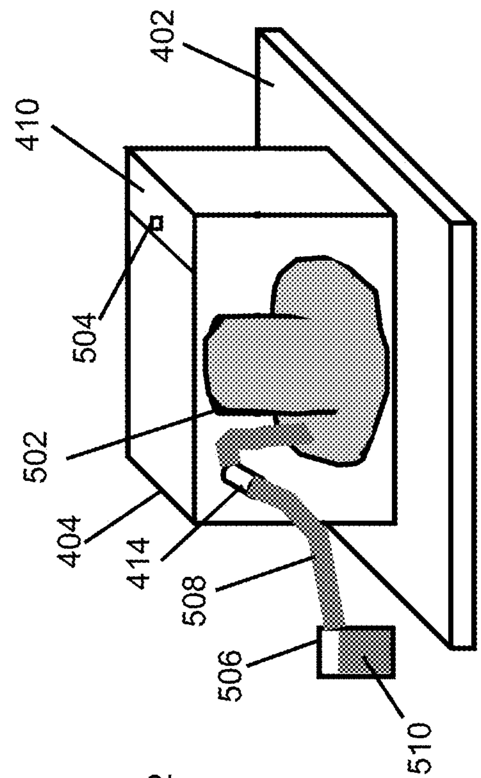


FIG. 5

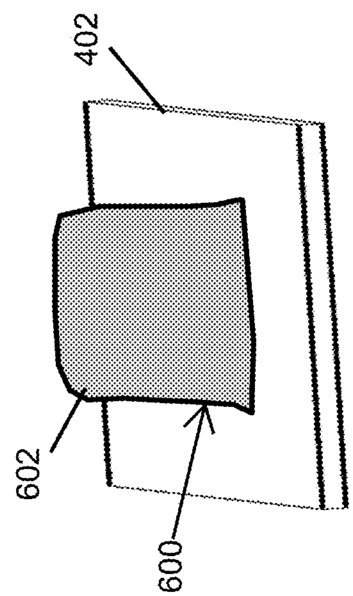


FIG. 6

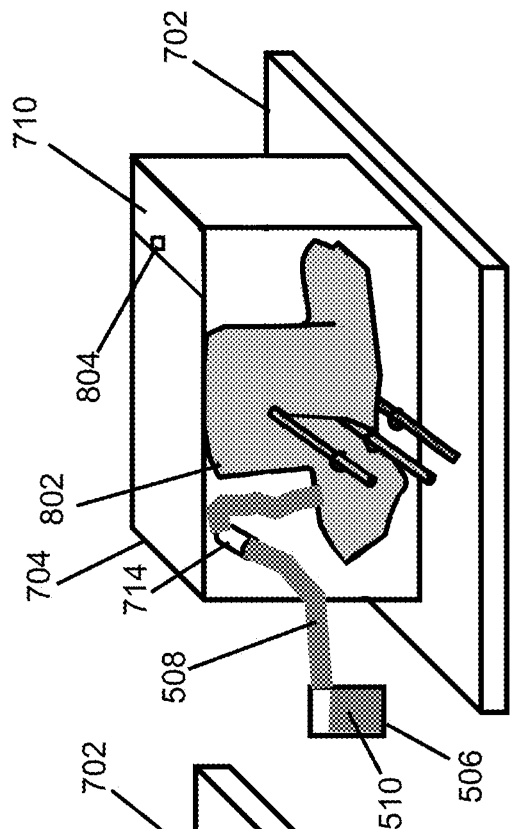


FIG. 8

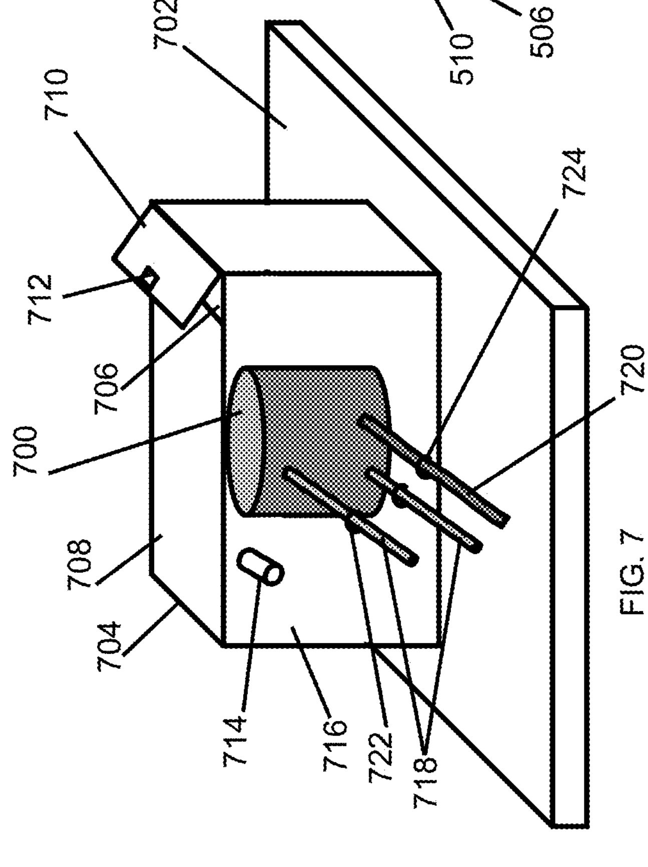


FIG. 7

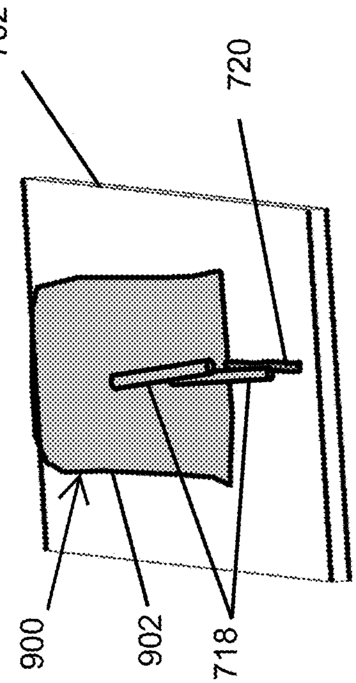


FIG. 9

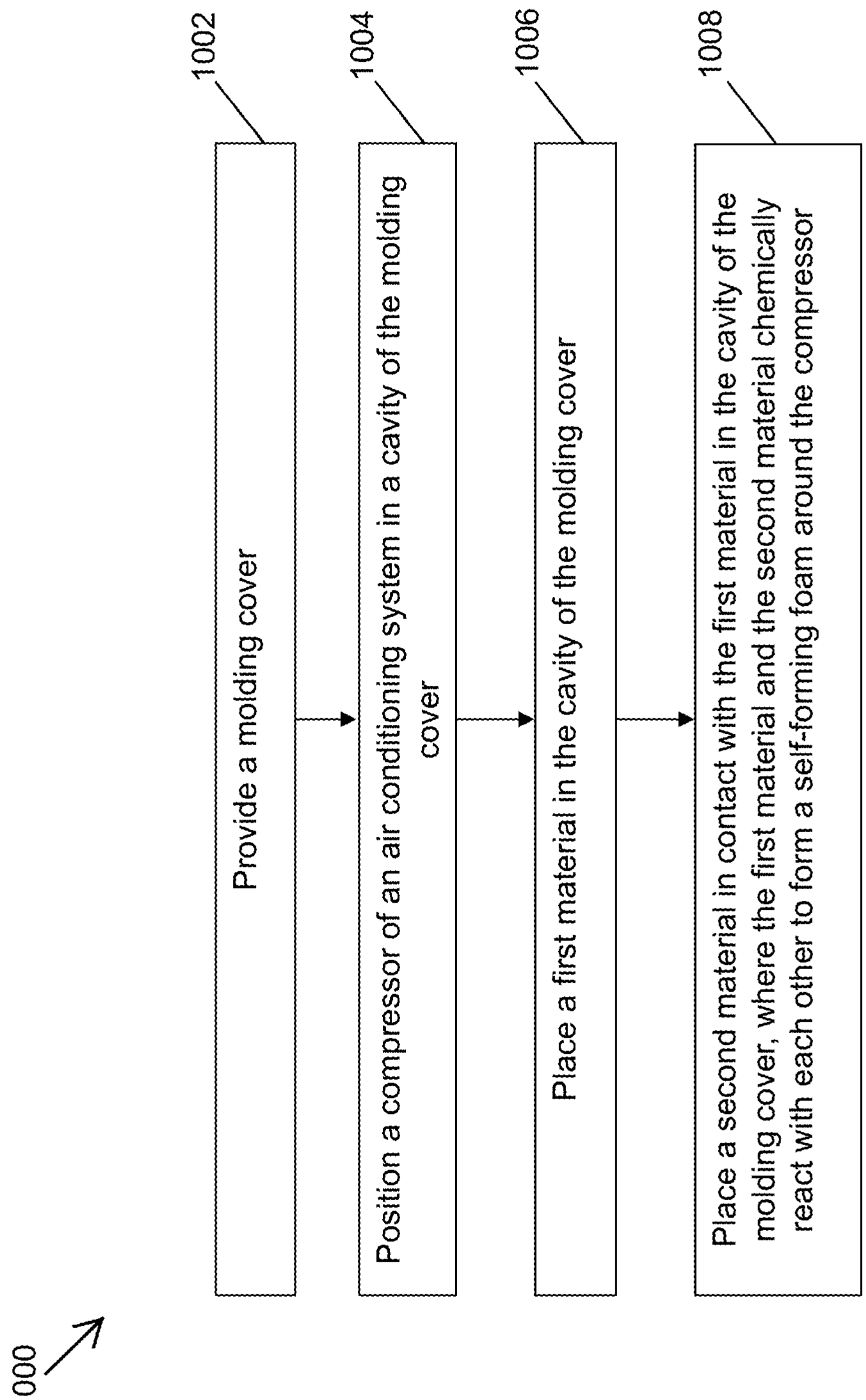

1000
1002
Provide a molding cover
1004
Position a compressor of an air conditioning system in a cavity of the molding cover
1006
Place a first material in the cavity of the molding cover
1008
Place a second material in contact with the first material in the cavity of the molding cover, where the first material and the second material chemically react with each other to form a self-forming foam around the compressor

FIG. 10

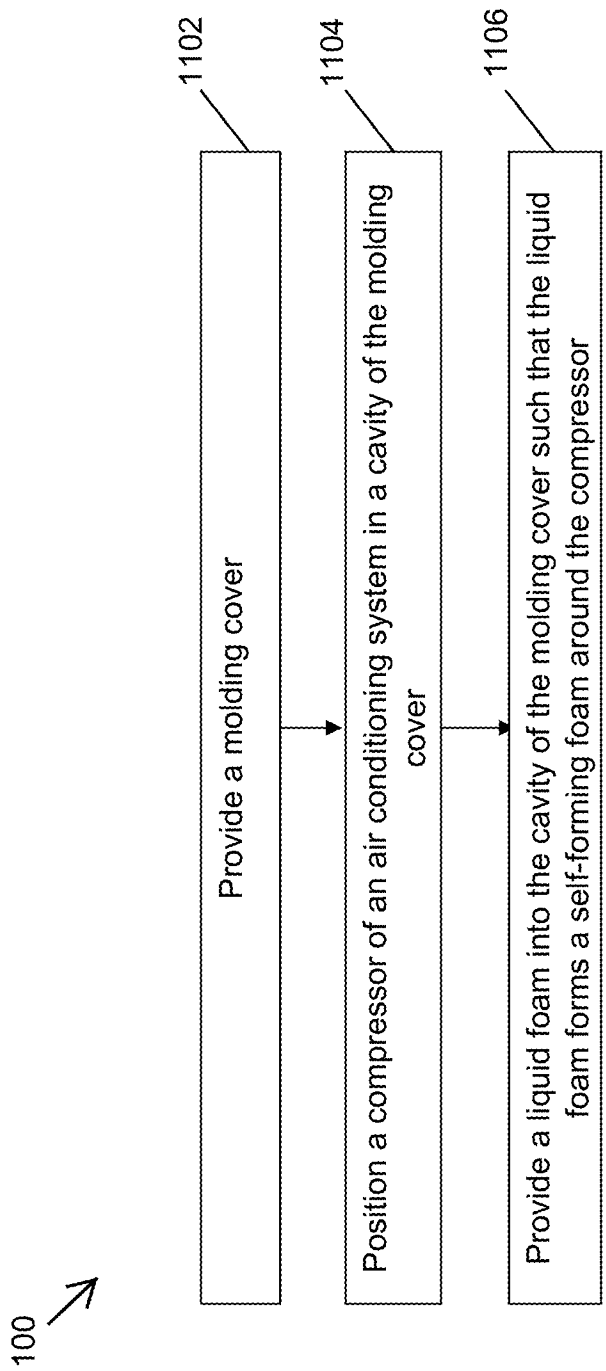

1100
1102
Provide a molding cover
1104
Position a compressor of an air conditioning system in a cavity of the molding cover
1106
Provide a liquid foam into the cavity of the molding cover such that the liquid foam forms a self-forming foam around the compressor

FIG. 11

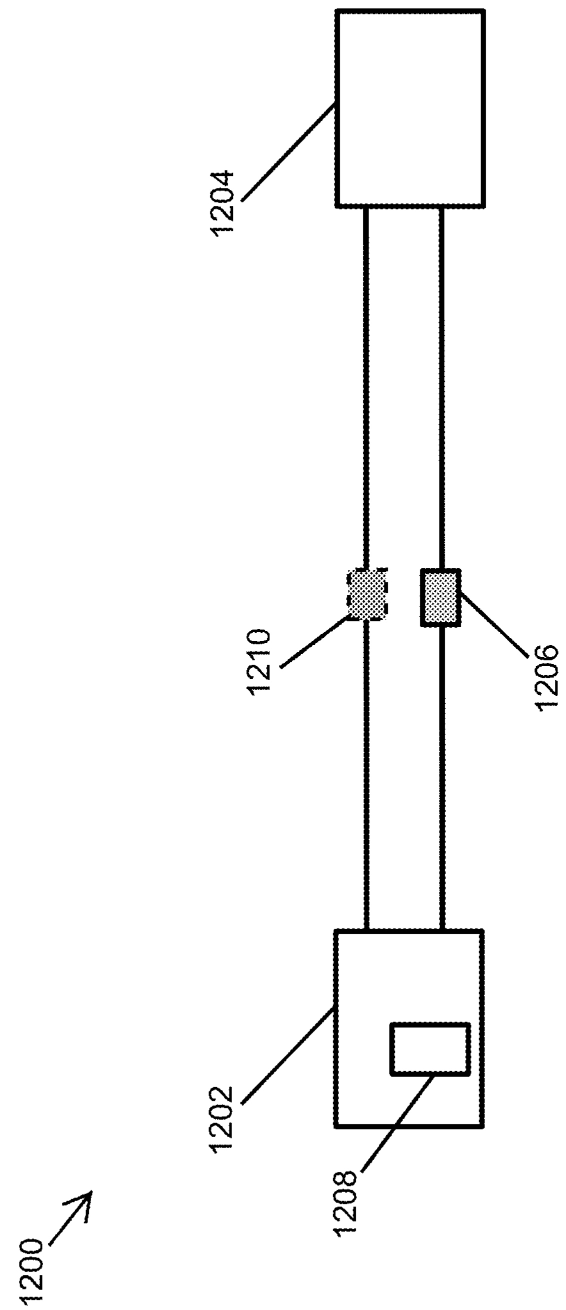


FIG. 12

AIR CONDITIONING COMPRESSOR SOUND ATTENUATION

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application is a continuation application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 16/218,316, filed 12 Dec. 2018, the entire contents of which is incorporated herein by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present disclosure relates generally to air conditioners, and more particularly to attenuation of sound produced by compressors of air conditioning systems including air conditioners and heat pumps.

BACKGROUND

Air conditioning systems, such as air conditioners and heat pumps, typically include a compressor. A compressor plays an important role in an air conditioning system by compressing the refrigerant of the system, which results in the removal of heat from the refrigerant. An operating compressor of an air conditioning system typically produces a loud sound. During normal operations of an outdoor air conditioning unit, the compressor contributes a significant amount of the sound produced by the outdoor air conditioning unit. The loud sound produced by a compressor can be a source of annoyance and complaints. One approach to dampening the sound produced by a compressor is to cover the compressor with a sound blanket. However, a typical sound blanket fails to satisfactorily dampen the sound produced by a compressor at least partly because of the difficulty of adequately covering gaps and openings that allow the sound to escape. Further, a sound blanket that has multiple layers to dampen the sound from a compressor may be relatively expensive. Thus, a solution that enables adequate dampening of a compressor sound cost effectively may be desirable.

SUMMARY

The present disclosure relates generally to air conditioners, and more particularly to attenuation of sound produced by compressors of air conditioning systems including air conditioners and heat pumps. In some example embodiments, a method of forming a sound attenuator around a compressor of an air conditioning system includes providing a molding cover, positioning a compressor of an air conditioning system in a cavity of the molding cover, and placing a first material in the cavity of the molding cover. The method further includes placing a second material in contact with the first material in the cavity of the molding cover. The first material and the second material chemically react with each other to form a self-forming foam around the compressor.

In another example embodiment, a method of forming a sound attenuator around a compressor of an air conditioning system includes providing a molding cover, positioning a compressor of an air conditioning system in a cavity of the molding cover, and providing a liquid foam into the cavity of the molding cover, where the liquid foam forms a self-forming foam around the compressor.

In another example embodiment, a compressor assembly includes a compressor of an air conditioning system, a protective cover covering the compressor, and a self-forming foam formed around the compressor. The self-forming foam is separated from the compressor by the protective cover. The self-forming foam attenuates a sound produced by the compressor.

These and other aspects, objects, features, and embodiments will be apparent from the following description and the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Reference will now be made to the accompanying drawings, which are not necessarily drawn to scale, and wherein:

FIG. **1** illustrates a compressor covered by a molding cover according to an example embodiment;

FIG. **2** illustrates a protective cover placed over the compressor of FIG. **1** according to an example embodiment;

FIG. **3** illustrates a side view of a compressor assembly including a self-forming foam formed around the compressor of FIG. **1** from one or more materials placed inside the molding cover according to an example embodiment;

FIG. **4** illustrates a compressor covered by a molding cover according to another example embodiment;

FIG. **5** illustrates a protective cover placed over the compressor of FIG. **4** according to an example embodiment;

FIG. **6** illustrates a side view of a compressor assembly including a self-forming foam formed around the compressor of FIG. **4** from a liquid foam material placed inside the molding cover according to an example embodiment;

FIG. **7** illustrates a compressor covered by a molding cover according to another example embodiment;

FIG. **8** illustrates a protective cover placed over the compressor of FIG. **7** according to an example embodiment;

FIG. **9** illustrates a side view of a compressor assembly including a self-forming foam formed around the compressor of FIG. **7** from a liquid foam material placed inside the molding cover according to an example embodiment;

FIG. **10** illustrates a flowchart of a method of forming a self-forming foam around a compressor according to an example embodiment;

FIG. **11** illustrates a flowchart of a method of forming a self-forming foam around a compressor according to an example embodiment; and

FIG. **12** illustrates an air conditioning system including a compressor assembly corresponding to the compressor assemblies of FIGS. **3**, **6**, and **9** according to an example embodiment.

The drawings illustrate only example embodiments and are therefore not to be considered limiting in scope. The elements and features shown in the drawings are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead being placed upon clearly illustrating the principles of the example embodiments. Additionally, certain dimensions or placements may be exaggerated to help visually convey such principles. In the drawings, the same reference numerals that are used in different drawings designate like or corresponding, but not necessarily identical elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In the following paragraphs, example embodiments will be described in further detail with reference to the figures. In the description, well-known components, methods, and/or processing techniques are omitted or briefly described. Furthermore, reference to various feature(s) of the embodiments is not to suggest that all embodiments must include the referenced feature(s).

Turning now to the figures, particular example embodiments are described. FIG. **1** illustrates a compressor **100** covered by a molding cover **104** according to an example embodiment. FIG. **2** illustrates a protective cover **202** placed over the compressor **100** of FIG. **1** according to an example embodiment. FIG. **3** illustrates a side view of a compressor assembly **300** including a self-forming foam **302** formed around the compressor **100** of FIG. **1** from one or more materials placed inside the molding cover according to an example embodiment. In FIGS. **1** and **2**, the front-facing wall of the molding cover **104** is shown as a transparent wall to more clearly show the cavity of the molding cover **104**. The phrase "self-forming foam" as used throughout this specification refers generally to a foam that is formed around a compressor, such as the compressor **100** or other compressors described herein, as a result of a chemical reaction (s) of constituent material(s) at the compressor and/or as a result of a transformation(s) of a material, such as a liquid foam, into a solid foam at the compressor.

Referring to FIGS. **1-3**, in some example embodiments, the compressor **100** may be placed on a platform **102**. For example, the platform **102** may be a base structure of an outdoor air conditioning unit. The compressor **100** of an air conditioning system (e.g., the air condition system shown in FIG. **12**) may be positioned in a cavity of the molding cover **104**. For example, the molding cover **104** may be placed over the compressor **100**, where, for example, the bottom side of the molding cover **104** is at least partially open.

In some example embodiments, the molding cover **104** includes an opening **106** and a door **110** that may be used to cover the opening **106**. For example, the opening **106** may be formed on a top wall **108** of the molding cover **104**. Alternatively, the opening **106** may be at a different location in the top wall **108** or another wall of the molding cover **104** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. The door **110** may include a latching mechanism **112** for keeping the door **110** latched to the top wall **108**.

In some example embodiments, the latching mechanism **112** may be an opening or another structure to interface with a latching structure **204** attached to the top wall **108**. The latching mechanism **112** and the latching structure **204** may operate to keep the door **110** latched such that the door closes the opening **106**. In some alternative embodiments, the door **110** may be kept latched to the top wall **108** by other means as may be contemplated by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure.

In some example embodiments, the compressor **100** may be covered by the protective cover **202** as more clearly shown in FIG. **2**. The protective cover **202** protects the compressor **100** from direct contact with the self-forming foam **302** or one or more materials that are used to form the self-forming foam **302**. For example, the protective cover **202** may be a flexible cover that is placed over the compressor **100**, for example, through the opening **106** before the opening is closed by the door **110**. Alternatively, the protective cover **202** may be a flexible cover that is placed over the compressor **100** before the compressor **100** is positioned in the cavity of the molding cover **104**. In some example embodiments, the protective cover **202** may be made from plastic. The molding cover **104** may be made from a suitable material such as one or more metals, wood, plastic, etc.

In some example embodiments, a material **206** that is used to form the self-forming foam **302** shown in FIG. **3** is placed in the cavity of the molding cover **104**. For example, the material **206** may be placed in the cavity of the molding cover **104** through the opening **106**. A material **208** that is used to form the self-forming foam **302** by interacting with the material **206** may be placed in the cavity of the molding cover **104**, for example, through the opening **106**. For example, the material **208** may be placed in contact with the material **206** such that the materials **206**, **208** interact with each other to form the self-forming foam **302** around the compressor **100**. The materials **206**, **208** may be placed at least partially on the protective cover **202**. One or both of the materials **206**, **208** may be poured into the cavity of the molding cover **104**, for example, through the opening **106**. Alternatively, the containers of the materials **206**, **208** may be opened or otherwise intentionally breached so that the materials **206**, **208** start undergoing a chemical reaction with each other to form the self-forming foam **302** around the compressor **100**.

In some example embodiments, the protective cover **202** may protect the compressor **100** from direct contact with the self-forming foam **302** or the materials **206**, **208**. For example, the protective cover **202** may be between the compressor **100** and the self-forming foam **302** such that the self-forming foam **302** is not in direct contact with the compressor **100**. The protective cover **202** allows, for example, easier removal of the entire or parts of the self-forming foam **302** from the compressor **100** and may provide some protection of the ports of the compressor **100** from direct exposure to the materials **206**, **208** and the self-forming foam **302**.

In some example embodiments, the materials **206**, **208** may be inside the protective cover **202** separated from the compressor **100** by the protective cover **202** itself. For example, the protective cover **202** may include compartments that keep the materials **206**, **208** separated from each other until the separation is removed to allow the materials **206**, **208** to interact chemically to form the self-forming foam **302**. The protective cover **202** may be placed over the compressor **100** to cover the compressor **100** while the materials **206**, **208** are inside the protective cover separated from each other. The protective cover **202** may protect the compressor **100** from direct contact with the self-forming foam **302** or the materials **206**, **208**.

In some alternative embodiments, the first material and the second material may be inside the protective cover separated from the compressor by the protective cover, where the compressor is covered by the protective cover while the first material and the second material are inside the protective cover. For example, the protective cover may include compartments that keep the first material and the second material separated from each other until the separation is removed to allow the first material and the second material to interact chemically to form the self-forming foam.

In some example embodiments, the protective cover **202** may be omitted without departing from the scope of this disclosure. For example, the materials **206**, **208** may be placed in contact with each other in the cavity of the molding cover **104**, where the self-forming foam is formed in direct contact with the compressor **100**.

In some example embodiments, at least one of the materials **206**, **208** may be a liquid material, and the materials **206**, **208** may start chemically reacting with each other to form the self-forming foam **302**. For example, the self-forming foam **302** may be a polyurethane foam. To illustrate, the material **206** may include Tertiary Amine(s), and the material **208** may include Polymeric Diphenylmethane Diisocyanate. The amount of the materials **206**, **208** that may be needed to form the self-forming foam **302** that provides adequate sound attenuation may vary, for example, depending on the desired sound attenuation level, the size of the compressor **100**, etc. as can be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure. The size of the molding cover **104** may vary, for example, depending on the size of the compressor **100**, the desired sound attenuation level, etc. as can be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure.

In some example embodiments, the door **110** is closed after materials **206**, **208** are placed in contact with each other or otherwise allowed to start chemically interacting. For example, the door **110** may need to be closed within a few seconds (e.g., 5 seconds) after the materials **206**, **208** start undergoing the chemical reaction that produces the self-forming foam **302**. By closing the door **110** and pressing on or holding down the molding cover **104**, if needed, the self-forming foam **302**, as it is being formed, expands to fill or cover spaces, voids, and gaps around the compressor **100** because of the limitation imposed by the molding cover **104** on continued outward expansion. The self-forming foam **302** may be ready within, for example, a few minutes (e.g., 2 minutes) after the materials **206**, **208** start chemically interacting to form the self-forming foam **302**. The molding cover **104** may be removed to expose the compressor assembly **300** shown in FIG. **3**.

In some example embodiments, the ports and electrical connectors of the compressor **100** may be accessed by precisely cutting through the self-forming foam **302**. Alternatively, pipes and electrical connections may be added or exposed prior to the self-forming foam **302** being formed, for example, as described with respect to FIGS. **7-9**.

The flexibility of the protective cover allows the self-forming form **302**, as it is being formed, to easily push the protective cover to reach and fill voids and gaps that may otherwise be left unfilled. By filling spaces, voids, and gaps around the compressor **100**, the self-forming foam **302** can provide a significant attenuation of the sound produced by the compressor **100**. For example, at 1250 MHz, which is a typical compressor running frequency of a single stage compressor, the compressor sound outside of the compressor assembly **300** may have a sound power level (LwA), for example, that is 15% or more lower than the sound power level of the compressor sound without the self-forming foam **302**. The self-forming foam **302** also results in compressor sound reductions at other frequencies, which contributes to lower overall sound produced by the compressor assembly **302**. The extent of sound attenuation may be changed by changing the type and/or amounts of the material(s) that are used to form the self-forming foam **302** and other factors as the amount of air introduced during the forming of the self-forming foam **302**.

Although the compressor **100** is shown as having a particular shape, the compressor **100** may have a different shape without departing from the scope of this disclosure. Although the molding cover **104** is shown as having a particular shape, the molding cover **104** may have a different shape without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the opening **106** and the door **110** may have different shapes and sizes than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure. The opening **106** may be located at a different location in the top wall **108** or in a different wall of the molding cover **104** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some example embodiments, the molding cover **104** may include more than one opening without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the protective cover **202** may have a different shape and size than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure.

FIG. **4** illustrates a compressor **400** covered by a molding cover **404** according to another example embodiment. FIG. **5** illustrates a protective cover **502** placed over the compressor **400** of FIG. **4** according to an example embodiment. FIG. **6** illustrates a side view of a compressor assembly **600** including a self-forming foam **602** formed around the compressor **400** of FIG. **4** from a liquid foam material placed inside the molding cover according to an example embodiment. In FIGS. **4** and **5**, the front-facing wall of the molding cover **404** is shown as a transparent wall to more clearly show the cavity of the molding cover **404**.

Referring to FIGS. **4-6**, in some example embodiments, the compressor **400** may be placed on a platform **402**. For example, the platform **402** may be a base structure of an outdoor air conditioning unit. The compressor **400** of an air conditioning system (e.g., the air condition system shown in FIG. **12**) may be positioned in a cavity of the molding cover **404**. For example, the molding cover **404** may be placed over the compressor **400**, where, for example, the bottom side of the molding cover **404** is at least partially open.

In some example embodiments, the molding cover **404** includes an opening **406** and a door **410** that may be used to cover the opening **406**. For example, the opening **406** may be formed on a top wall **408** of the molding cover **404**. Alternatively, the opening **406** may be at a different location in the top wall **408** or another wall of the molding cover **404** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. The door **410** may include a latching mechanism **412** for keeping the door **410** latched to the top wall **408**.

In some example embodiments, the latching mechanism **412** may be an opening or another structure to interface with a latching structure **504** attached to the top wall **408**. The latching mechanism **412** and the latching structure **504** may operate to keep the door **410** latched such that the door closes the opening **406**. In some alternative embodiments, the door **410** may be kept latched to the top wall **408** by other means as may be contemplated by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure.

In some example embodiments, the compressor **400** may be covered by the protective cover **502** as more clearly shown in FIG. **4**. The protective cover **502** protects the compressor **400** from direct contact with the self-forming foam **602** or one or more materials, such as a liquid foam, that may be used to form the self-forming foam **402**. For example, the protective cover **302** may be a flexible cover that is placed over the compressor **400**, for example, through the opening **406** before the opening is closed by the door **410**. Alternatively, the protective cover **502** may be a flexible cover that is placed over the compressor **400** before the compressor **400** is positioned in the cavity of the molding cover **404**. In some example embodiments, the protective cover **502** may be made from plastic. The molding cover **404** may be made from a suitable material such as one or more metals, wood, plastic, etc.

In some example embodiments, a liquid foam **510** that is used to form the self-forming foam **602** shown in FIG. **6** is provided into the cavity of the molding cover **404**. For example, the liquid foam **510** may be provided into the cavity of the molding cover **104** through an opening/port **414** in a front-facing wall **416** of the molding cover **404**. To illustrate, a liquid foam container **506** may be fluidly connected to the opening **414** via a fluid connection **508** (e.g., a flexible hose). For example, the liquid foam container **506** may operate as a pump to pump some of the liquid foam **510** into the cavity of the molding cover **404** through the opening **414**. The liquid foam **510** that enters the cavity of the molding cover **404** may be placed at least partially on the protective cover **502**. In some alternative embodiments, the liquid foam **510** may be poured or otherwise placed in the cavity of the molding cover **404**, for example, through the opening **406**.

In some example embodiments, the protective cover **502** may protect the compressor **400** from direct contact with the self-forming foam **602** or the liquid foam **510**. For example, the protective cover **502** may be between the compressor **400** and the self-forming foam **602** such that the self-forming foam **602** is not in direct contact with the compressor **400**. The protective cover **502** allows, for example, easier removal of the entire or parts of the self-forming foam **602** from the compressor **400** and may provide some protection of the ports of the compressor **400** from direct exposure to the liquid foam **510** and the self-forming foam **602**.

In some example embodiments, the protective cover **502** may be omitted without departing from the scope of this disclosure. For example, the liquid foam **510** may be placed (e.g., pumped by the liquid foam container **506**) into the cavity of the molding cover **404**, where the self-forming foam **602** is formed in direct contact with the compressor **400**.

In some example embodiments, the self-forming foam **602** formed from the liquid foam **510** may be a polyurethane foam. The amount of the liquid foam **510** that may be needed to form the self-forming foam **602** that provides adequate sound attenuation may vary, for example, depending on the desired sound attenuation level, the size of the compressor **600**, etc. as can be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure. The size of the molding cover **404** may vary, for example, depending on the size of the compressor **400**, the desired sound attenuation level, etc. as can be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure.

In some example embodiments, the door **410** is closed before the liquid foam **510** is provided into the cavity of the molding cover **404**. Alternatively, the door **410** may need to be closed within a few seconds after the start of providing the liquid foam **510** into the cavity of the molding cover **404** to form the self-forming foam **602**. By closing the door **410** and pressing on or holding down the molding cover **404**, if needed, the self-forming foam **602**, as it is being formed, expands to fill or cover spaces, voids, and gaps around the compressor **400** because of the limitation imposed by the molding cover **404** on continued outward expansion. The self-forming foam **602** may be ready within, for example, a few minutes after the liquid foam **510** is provided into the cavity of the molding cover **404** to form the self-forming foam **602**. The molding cover **404** may be removed to expose the compressor assembly **600** shown in FIG. **6**.

In some example embodiments, the ports and electrical connectors of the compressor **400** may be accessed by precisely cutting through the self-forming foam **602**. Alternatively, pipes and electrical connections may be added or exposed prior to the self-forming foam **602** being formed, for example, as described with respect to FIGS. **7-9**.

The flexibility of the protective cover allows the self-forming form **602**, as it is being formed, to easily push the protective cover to reach and fill voids and gaps that may otherwise be left unfilled. By filling spaces, voids, and gaps around the compressor **400**, the self-forming foam **602** can provide a significant attenuation of the sound produced by the compressor **400**. The extent of sound attenuation provided by the self-forming foam **602** may be changed by changing the type and/or amount of the liquid foam that is used to form the self-forming foam **602** and other factors as the amount of air introduced during the forming of the self-forming foam **602**.

Although the compressor **400** is shown as having a particular shape, the compressor **400** may have a different shape without departing from the scope of this disclosure. Although the molding cover **404** is shown as having a particular shape, the molding cover **104** may have a different shape without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the opening **406** and the door **410** may have different shapes and sizes than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the opening **414** may have a different shape and size than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure. The opening **414** may be located at a different location in the top wall **408** or in a different wall of the molding cover **404** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. The opening **406** may be located at a different location in the front-facing wall **416** or in a different wall of the molding cover **404** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some example embodiments, the molding cover **404** may include more than one opening without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the protective cover **502** may have a different shape and size than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the opening **406** may be omitted without departing from the scope of this disclosure.

FIG. **7** illustrates the compressor **700** covered by a molding cover **704** according to another example embodiment. FIG. **8** illustrates a protective cover **802** placed over the compressor **700** of FIG. **7** according to an example embodiment. FIG. **9** illustrates a side view of a compressor assembly **900** including a self-forming foam **902** formed around the compressor **700** of FIG. **7** from a liquid foam material placed inside the molding cover according to an example embodiment. In FIGS. **7** and **8**, the front-facing wall of the molding cover **704** is shown as a transparent wall to more clearly show the cavity of the molding cover **704**.

Referring to FIGS. **7-9**, in some example embodiments, the compressor **700** may be placed on a platform **702**. For example, the platform **702** may be a base structure of an outdoor air conditioning unit. The compressor **700** of an air conditioning system (e.g., the air condition system shown in FIG. **12**) may be positioned in a cavity of the molding cover **704**. For example, the molding cover **704** may be placed over the compressor **700**, where, for example, the bottom side of the molding cover **704** is at least partially open.

In some example embodiments, the molding cover **704** includes an opening **706** and a door **710** that may be used to cover the opening **706**. For example, the opening **706** may be formed on a top wall **708** of the molding cover **704**. Alternatively, the opening **706** may be at a different location in the top wall **708** or another wall of the molding cover **704** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. The door **710** may include a latching mechanism **712** for keeping the door **710** latched to the top wall **708**.

In some example embodiments, the latching mechanism **712** may be an opening or another structure to interface with a latching structure **804** attached to the top wall **708**. The latching mechanism **712** and the latching structure **804** may operate to keep the door **710** latched such that the door closes the opening **706**. In some alternative embodiments, the door **710** may be kept latched to the top wall **708** by other means as may be contemplated by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure.

In some example embodiments, the compressor **700** may be covered by the protective cover **802** as more clearly shown in FIG. **7**. The protective cover **802** protects the compressor **700** from direct contact with the self-forming foam **902** or one or more materials, such as a liquid foam **510**, that may be used to form the self-forming foam **702**. For example, the protective cover **302** may be a flexible cover that is placed over the compressor **700**, for example, through the opening **706** before the opening is closed by the door **710**. Alternatively, the protective cover **802** may be a flexible cover that is placed over the compressor **700** before the compressor **700** is positioned in the cavity of the molding cover **704**. In some example embodiments, the protective cover **802** may be made from plastic. The molding cover **704** may be made from a suitable material such as one or more metals, wood, plastic, etc.

In some example embodiments, pipes **718** may already be attached to the ports, such as the discharge and suction ports, of the compressor **700**. For example, the compressor **700** may be an existing compressor of an outdoor unit of an air conditioner system or a heat pump system that is already in use. Alternatively, the pipes **718** may be attached to the ports of the compressor **700** prior to forming the self-forming foam **902** shown in FIG. **9**. In some example embodiments, the pipes **718** may extend out of the molding cover **704** through respective openings, such as the opening **722**, in a wall of the molding cover **704**. As shown in FIG. **8**, the protective cover **802** covers portions of the pipes **718**.

In some example embodiments, one or more electrical wires **720** may already be attached to one or more electrical connectors of the compressor **700**. For example, the compressor **700** may be an existing compressor of an outdoor unit of an air conditioner system or a heat pump system that is already in use. Alternatively, the electrical wires **720** may be attached to the connectors of the compressor **700** prior to forming the self-forming foam **902** shown in FIG. **9**. In some example embodiments, the electrical wires **720** may extend out of the molding cover **704** through an opening **724** or another opening in a wall of the molding cover **704**. As shown in FIG. **8**, the protective cover **802** covers portions of the wires **720**.

In some example embodiments, the liquid foam **510** that is used to form the self-forming foam **902** shown in FIG. **9** is provided into the cavity of the molding cover **704**. For example, the liquid foam **510** may be provided into the cavity of the molding cover **104** through an opening/port **714** in a front-facing wall **716** of the molding cover **704**. To illustrate, the liquid foam container **506** may be fluidly connected to the opening **714** via the fluid connection **508** (e.g., a flexible hose). For example, the liquid foam container **506** may operate as a pump to pump some of the liquid foam **510** into the cavity of the molding cover **704** through the opening **714**. The liquid foam **510** that enters the cavity of the molding cover **704** may be placed at least partially on the protective cover **802**. In some alternative embodiments, the liquid foam **510** may be poured or otherwise placed in the cavity of the molding cover **704**, for example, through the opening **706**.

In some example embodiments, the protective cover **802** may protect the compressor **700** from direct contact with the self-forming foam **902** or the liquid foam **510**. For example, the protective cover **802** may be between the compressor **700** and the self-forming foam **902** such that the self-forming foam **902** is not in direct contact with the compressor **700**. The protective cover **802** allows, for example, easier removal of the entire or parts of the self-forming foam **902** from the compressor **700**.

In some example embodiments, the protective cover **802** may be omitted without departing from the scope of this disclosure. For example, the liquid foam **510** may be placed (e.g., pumped by the liquid foam container **506**) into the cavity of the molding cover **704**, where the self-forming foam **902** is formed in direct contact with the compressor **700**.

In some example embodiments, the self-forming foam **902** formed from the liquid foam **510** may be a polyurethane foam. The amount of the liquid foam **510** that may be needed to form the self-forming foam **902** that provides adequate sound attenuation may vary, for example, depending on the desired sound attenuation level, the size of the compressor **900**, etc. as can be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure. The size of the molding cover **704** may vary, for example, depending on the size of the compressor **700**, the desired sound attenuation level, etc. as can be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art with the benefit of this disclosure.

In some example embodiments, the door **710** is closed before the liquid foam **510** is provided into the cavity of the molding cover **704**. Alternatively, the door **710** may need to be closed within a few seconds after the start of providing the liquid foam **510** into the cavity of the molding cover **704** to form the self-forming foam **902**. By closing the door **710** and pressing on or holding down the molding cover **704**, if needed, the self-forming foam **902**, as it is being formed, expands to fill or cover spaces, voids, and gaps around the compressor **700** because of the limitation imposed by the molding cover **704** on continued outward expansion. The self-forming foam **902** may be ready within, for example, a few minutes after the liquid foam **510** is provided into the cavity of the molding cover **704** to form the self-forming foam **902**. The molding cover **704** may be removed to expose the compressor assembly **900** shown in FIG. **9**.

The flexibility of the protective cover allows the self-forming form **902**, as it is being formed, to easily push the protective cover to reach and fill voids and gaps that may otherwise be left unfilled. By filling spaces, voids, and gaps around the compressor **700**, the self-forming foam **902** can provide a significant attenuation of the sound produced by the compressor **700**. The extent of sound attenuation provided by the self-forming foam **902** may be changed by changing the type and/or amount of the liquid foam that is used to form the self-forming foam **902** and other factors as the amount of air introduced during the forming of the self-forming foam **902**.

Although FIGS. **7-9** are described with respect to a liquid foam being used to form the self-forming form **902**, in alternative embodiments, other materials, such as the materials **206**, **208**, may be used as described above with respect to FIGS. **1-3**. Although the compressor **700** is shown as having a particular shape, the compressor **700** may have a different shape without departing from the scope of this disclosure. Although the molding cover **704** is shown as having a particular shape, the molding cover **104** may have a different shape without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the opening **706** and the door **710** may have different shapes and sizes than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the opening **714** may have a different shape and size than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure. The opening **714** may be located at a different location in the top wall **708** or in a different wall of the molding cover **704** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. The opening **706** may be located at a different location in the front-facing wall **716** or in a different wall of the molding cover **704** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some example embodiments, the molding cover **704** may include more than one opening without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the protective cover **802** may have a different shape and size than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the opening **706** may be omitted without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some example embodiments, the compressor **700** corresponds to the compressors **100**, **400** described above. In some example embodiments, the molding cover **704** corresponds to the molding covers **104**, **404** described above. In some example embodiments, the protective cover **802** corresponds to the protective covers **202**, **402** described above.

FIG. **10** illustrates a flowchart of a method **1000** of forming a self-forming foam around a compressor according to an example embodiment. Referring to FIGS. **1-3** and **10**, in some example embodiments, the method **1000** includes, at step **1002**, providing a molding cover such as the molding cover **104**. At step **1004**, the method **1000** may include positioning a compressor of an air conditioning system in a cavity of the molding cover. For example, the compressor **100** may be positioned in the cavity of the molding cover **104**, for example, by placing the molding cover **104** over the compressor **100**.

In some example embodiments, at step **1006**, the method **1000** may include placing a first material in the cavity of the molding cover, such as the cavity of the molding cover **104**. At step **1008**, the method **1000** may include placing a second material in contact with the first material in the cavity of the molding cover, such as the cavity of the molding cover **104**. The first material, such as the material **206** shown in FIG. **2**, may be placed in the cavity of the molding cover, for example, by pouring in the first material through an opening, such as the opening **106** of the molding cover **104**. The second material, such as the material **208** shown in FIG. **2**, may be placed in contact with the first material by also pouring in the second material into the cavity of the molding cover. Alternatively, the containers of the materials **206**, **208** may be opened or otherwise intentionally breached so that the materials **206**, **208** start chemically interacting with each other. The first material and the second material chemically react with each other to form a self-forming foam around the compressor. For example, at least one of the first material and the second material may be a liquid material, and the first and second material may react with each other to form the self-forming foam **302**, which may be a polyurethane foam. To illustrate, the first material may include tertiary amine(s), and the second material may include polymeric diphenylmethane diisocyanate.

In some example embodiments, the method **1000** includes covering the compressor by a protective cover. For example, the compressor **100** may be covered by the protective cover **202** as described above. To illustrate, the compressor **100** may be covered by the protective cover **202** before the first and second materials are placed in the cavity of the molding cover **104** or before the self-forming foam is formed. In some alternative embodiments, the first material and the second material may be inside the protective cover separated from the compressor by the protective cover, where the compressor is covered by the protective cover while the first material and the second material are inside the protective cover. For example, the protective cover may include compartments that keep the first material and the second material separated from each other until the separation is removed to allow the first material and the second material to interact chemically to form the self-forming foam.

When a protective cover, such as the protective cover **202** is used, the protective cover is between the compressor and the self-forming foam formed from the interaction of the first and second materials that are placed in the cavity of the molding cover. The protective cover may be a flexible cover, such a cover made from plastic. The flexibility of the protective cover allows the self-forming form, as it is being formed, to easily push the protective cover to reach and fill voids and gaps that may otherwise be left unfilled.

In some example embodiments, one or more pipes may be attached to respective ports of the compressor before placing the second material in contact with the first material to form the self-forming foam. For example, the compressor may be a new compressor, and tubing (e.g., the pipes **718** shown in FIGS. **7-9**) may be added to the compressor, such as the compressor **100** before the self-forming foam is formed. Alternatively, the compressor may be an existing compressor that already has connected pipes.

In some example embodiments, one or more steps of the method **1000** described above may be omitted or performed in a different order than described. In some example embodiments, the method **1000** may include other steps. In some example embodiments, some of the steps of the method **1000** may be combined without departing from the scope of this disclosure.

FIG. **11** illustrates a flowchart of a method of forming a self-forming foam around a compressor according to an example embodiment. Referring to FIGS. **4-9** and **11**, in some example embodiments, the method **1100** includes, at step **1102**, providing a molding cover such as the molding cover **404**, **704**. At step **1104**, the method **1100** may include positioning a compressor of an air conditioning system in a cavity of the molding cover. For example, the compressor **400** may be positioned in the cavity of the molding cover **404**, for example, by placing the molding cover **404** over the compressor **400**. As another example, the compressor **700** may be positioned in the cavity of the molding cover **704**, for example, by placing the molding cover **704** over the compressor **700**.

In some example embodiments, at step **1106**, the method **1000** may include providing a liquid foam into the cavity of the molding cover, where the liquid foam forms a self-forming foam around the compressor. For example, a liquid foam may be provided into the cavity of the molding cover **404**, **704** via a respective opening/port **414**, **714**, and the liquid foam may form a self-forming foam that covers the compressor **400**, **700**, respectively. To illustrate, the liquid foam may be pumped into the cavity of the molding cover.

In some example embodiments, the method **1100** includes covering the compressor by a protective cover such that the protective cover is between the compressor and the self-forming foam that is formed from the liquid foam. For example, the compressor **400**, **700** may be covered by the protective cover **502**, **802**, respectively, as described above. To illustrate, the compressor **400** may be covered by the protective cover **502** before the liquid foam is provided into the cavity of the molding cover **404**, and the compressor **700** may be covered by the protective cover **802** before the liquid foam is provided into the cavity of the molding cover **704**.

When a protective cover, such as the protective cover **502**, **802**, is used, the protective cover is between the compressor and the self-forming foam formed from the liquid foam provided into the cavity of the molding cover through the opening/port **414**, **714** or openings **406**, **706**. The protective cover may be a flexible cover, such a cover made from plastic. The flexibility of the protective cover allows the self-forming form, as it is being formed, to easily push the protective cover to reach and fill voids and gaps that may otherwise be left unfilled.

In some example embodiments, one or more pipes may be attached to respective ports of the compressor before placing the second material in contact with the first material to form the self-forming foam. For example, the compressor **700** may be a new compressor, and tubing, such as the pipes **718**, may be added to the compressor **700** before the self-forming foam is formed. Alternatively, the compressor may be an existing compressor that already has connected pipes.

In some example embodiments, one or more steps of the method **1100** described above may be omitted or performed in a different order than described. In some example embodiments, the method **1100** may include other steps. In some example embodiments, some of the steps of the method **1100** may be combined without departing from the scope of this disclosure.

FIG. **12** illustrates an air conditioning system **1200** including a compressor assembly **1208** corresponding to each of the compressor assemblies **302**, **602**, **902** of FIGS. **3**, **6**, and **9** according to an example embodiment. For example, the air conditioning system **1200** may include a self-formed foam, such as the self-formed foam **302**, **602**, **902**, formed around a compressor, such as the compressor **100**, **300**, **700**.

In some example embodiments, the air conditioning system **1200** may be an air conditioner system or heat pump system. In some example embodiments, the air conditioning system **1200** includes an outdoor unit **1202**, an indoor unit **1204**, and an expansion valve **1206**. In some example embodiments, the air conditioning system **1200** may also include other equipment **1210**, such as a reversing valve.

In some example embodiments, the outdoor unit **1202** includes the compressor assembly **1208** as well as other components (not shown) such as a fan, coil, etc. The indoor unit **1204** also includes components such as a coil that may serve as an evaporator or a condenser. During operations of the air conditioning system **1200**, the outdoor unit **1202** produces a significantly lower sound than a typical outdoor unit that includes a compressor that is not covered by the self-forming foam, such as the self-formed foam **302**, **602**, **902**. In particular, the sound compressor assembly **1208** produces a significantly lower sound than a typical outdoor unit that is not covered by the self-forming foam, such as the self-formed foam **302**, **602**, **902**. For example, the sound compressor assembly **1208** may result in greater than a 15% sound reduction at 1250 MHz, which is a frequency associated with the sound commonly produced by air conditioning system compressors. The self-forming foam of the compressor assembly **1208** provides a significant sound reduction at reasonably low cost and low complexity.

In some alternative embodiments, the air conditioning system **1200** may include other components than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some alternative embodiments, the air conditioning system **1200** may include other connections than shown without departing from the scope of this disclosure.

Although particular embodiments have been described herein in detail, the descriptions are by way of example. The features of the embodiments described herein are representative and, in alternative embodiments, certain features, elements, and/or steps may be added or omitted. Additionally, modifications to aspects of the embodiments described herein may be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the following claims, the scope of which are to be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass modifications and equivalent structures.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for forming a sound-attenuating structure around a compressor, the method comprising:

covering the compressor with a flexible protective cover such that at least some of an inner surface of the flexible protective cover abuts the compressor;

depositing a plurality of materials proximate an outer surface of the flexible protective cover, at least some of the plurality of materials being configured to chemically react to create a self-forming foam that abuts at least some of the flexible protective cover to thereby create the sound-attenuating structure around the compressor, wherein the plurality of materials are deposited in a first compartment formed by the flexible protective cover and a second compartment formed by the flexible protective cover, such that two discrete portions of self-forming foam are created on the outer surface of the flexible protective cover instead of the inner surface of the flexible protective cover, wherein the flexible protective cover extends outward with respect to the compressor to form the first compartment and second compartment; and

forming, after the self-forming foam is created, an aperture in the self-forming foam to access a port of the compressor.

2. The method of claim **1** further comprising:

positioning a molding cover at least partially around the compressor such that the compressor and the flexible protective cover are located in a cavity formed at least in part by the molding cover,

wherein depositing the plurality of materials comprises placing the plurality of materials into the cavity of the molding cover.

3. The method of claim **2**, wherein the molding cover includes an opening for placing the plurality of materials into the cavity of the molding cover.

4. The method of claim **2** further comprising:

removing the molding cover from the compressor after creating the sound-attenuating structure around the compressor.

5. The method of claim **1**, wherein the self-forming foam is configured to expand, thereby pushing the flexible protective cover inwardly toward the compressor to reduce voids located between the flexible protective cover and the compressor.

6. The method of claim **1**, wherein the flexible protective cover is configured to separate the self-forming foam from the compressor.

7. The method of claim **6**, wherein the flexible protective cover is configured to enable the sound-attenuating structure to be removable from the compressor.

8. The method of claim **1** further comprising:

attaching one or more pipes to one or more respective ports of the compressor before depositing at least some of the plurality of materials proximate the outer surface of the flexible protective cover.

9. The method of claim **1**, wherein the self-forming foam comprises a polyurethane foam, and wherein the plurality of materials includes tertiary amine and polymeric diphenylmethane diisocyanate.

10. The method of claim **1**, wherein the flexible protective cover extends outward in a plurality of directions with respect to the compressor.

11. A compressor assembly, the compressor assembly comprising:

a compressor; and

a sound-attenuating structure configured to attenuate a sound produced by the compressor, the sound-attenuating structure comprising:

a flexible protective cover covering the compressor; and

a self-forming foam formed around the compressor, the self-forming foam being formed by chemical reaction of a plurality of materials placed around an outside of the flexible protective cover, the plurality of materials substantially surrounding the flexible protective cover, the plurality of materials being configured to chemically react to form the self-forming foam,

wherein the flexible protective cover separates the self-forming foam from the compressor, and

wherein the plurality of materials are deposited in a first compartment formed by the flexible protective cover and a second compartment formed by the flexible protective cover, such that two discrete portions of self-forming foam are formed on an outer surface of the flexible protective cover instead of an inner surface of the flexible protective cover, wherein the flexible protective cover extends outward with respect to the compressor to form the first compartment and second compartment.

12. The compressor assembly of claim 11, wherein a pipe is connected to a port of the compressor via an aperture in the self-forming foam.

13. The compressor assembly of claim 11, wherein the self-forming foam comprises a polyurethane foam.

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