CLAIMS

1. A non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch comprising:

an electronic switching mechanism disposed within a housing of the non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch, wherein the electronic switching mechanism is configured to modulate the non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch between an active state and an inactive state;

an aperture in the housing, wherein the aperture defines an insertion path extending from a first location external to the housing to a second location internal to the housing;

a photodiode disposed within the housing, wherein the photodiode is configured to operate the electronic switching mechanism; and

a mechanical lockout device having a protrusion configured to be inserted through the aperture along the insertion path, wherein the protrusion includes a light emitting diode configured to transmit a signal along a signal path to the photodiode.

2. The non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch of claim 1, wherein the electronic switching mechanism includes at least one semiconductor defining a non-mechanical electronic switch, and wherein the non-mechanical electronic switch is configured to switch the non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch between the active state and the inactive state based on electronic action.

3. The non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch of claim 1, including a structure having a reflective surface oriented to reflect the signal along the signal path from the light emitting diode to the photodiode.

4. The non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch of claim 3, wherein the reflective surface faces the light emitting diode and the photodiode, and wherein the light emitting diode is configured to transmit an incident signal along the signal path to the reflective surface and the reflective surface is oriented to reflect the incident signal as a reflected signal along the signal path to the photodiode.

5. The non-mechanical electronic switch of claim 1, wherein the signal is infrared light.

6. A method of mechanically locking a non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch comprising:

inserting a protrusion of a mechanical lockout device through an aperture in a housing of the non-mechanical-interfacing electronic switch, wherein the protrusion is inserted along an insertion path extending from a first location external to the housing to a second location internal to the housing, and wherein the inserting includes transmitting a signal transmitted from a light emitting diode disposed on the protrusion along a signal path to a photodiode disposed within the housing; and

controlling an electronic switching mechanism disposed within the housing based on the inserting.

7. A mechanical-interfacing electronic switch comprising:

an electronic switching mechanism disposed within a housing of the mechanical-interfacing electronic switch, wherein the electronic switching mechanism includes at least one semiconductor defining a non-mechanical electronic switch, and wherein the non-mechanical electronic switch is configured to switch the mechanical-interfacing electronic switch between an active state and an inactive state based on electronic action;

a photodiode disposed within the housing; and

a light emitting diode disposed in the housing, wherein the light emitting diode is configured to transmit a signal along a signal path to the photodiode; and

a mechanical-interfacing control part having a base portion located external to the housing and a protrusion located internal to the housing,

wherein movement of the base portion causes movement of the protrusion such that in a first position the protrusion does not intersect a signal path produced between the light emitting diode and the photodiode, and in a second position the protrusion intersects with the signal path, such that the mechanical interface serves to actuate the electronic switch between an active state and an inactive state; and

a hasp, wherein the base portion is oriented to engage the hasp in one of the first position or the second position.