This Sheet Has Been Replaced



ABSTRACT

AN OPTICAL STORAGE DEVICE

The present invention provides an apparatus and method for sensing the contamination level in an optical storage device and for issuing a signal when the contamination exceeds a predetermined value relative to a base value. The tracking error signal gain of an optical drive is monitored and compared with a base gain. An alert signal is then generated if the actual measured gain exceeds a predetermined level relative to the base gain, whereupon a cleaning device can be mounted in the storage device and optical elements cleaned.