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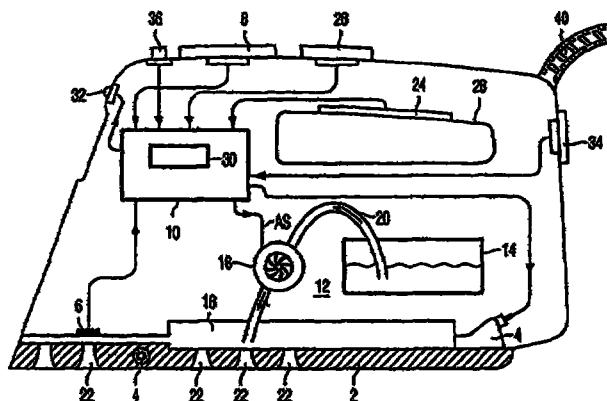


200002790-4

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁷ : D06F 75/18, 75/26		A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 00/17439
			(43) International Publication Date: 30 March 2000 (30.03.00)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/EP99/06730		(81) Designated States: CN, JP, SG, European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE).	
(22) International Filing Date: 13 September 1999 (13.09.99)			
(30) Priority Data: 9803799-7 22 September 1998 (22.09.98) SG		Published With international search report.	
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(54) Title: STEAM IRON WITH CALCIFICATION INDICATION



(57) Abstract

A steam iron with an indicator (32) for indicating calcification. For this purpose, the iron is provided with a timer (30) for measuring an accumulated time of use of the steam iron, and means (10) for activating the indicator (32) when the accumulated time exceeds a predetermined threshold level. The timer (30) measures the time of use of the steam iron. The accumulated time of use is indicative of the amount of scale deposited in the steam chamber (18) and steam vents (22). When the accumulated time of use exceeds a threshold the calcification indicator (32) is activated to warn the user that a self-clean action is to be performed. A refinement of the time of use measurement may be obtained by accumulating the time of use only during steam generation. A further refinement may be obtained by correcting the accumulated time of use with a weighting factor which depends on the steaming rate. The higher the steaming rate, the faster the accumulation of the time of use proceeds. Alternatively, the weighting factor may be made dependent on the hardness of the water to be steamed. It is further possible to make the threshold level for activating the calcification indicator dependent on the hardness of the water. The softer the water, the longer the interval can be between two self-cleans can be. The hardness of the water can be compensated for by means of a dial (34) set by the user or by a hidden switch to be set in the shop.