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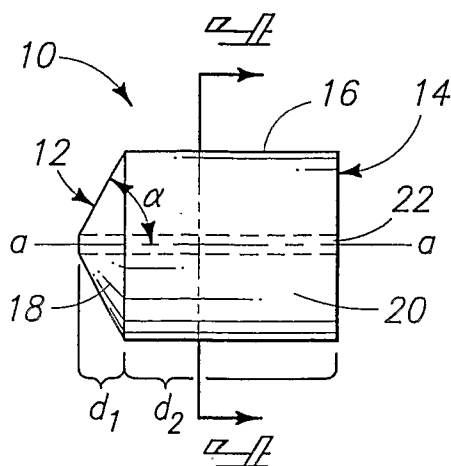
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(54) Title: CERAMIC INSULATOR BEADS AND ARTICULATING THERMOCOUPLE ASSEMBLIES



(57) Abstract: The invention includes an insulator comprising a cylindrical portion (20) which has a uniform outer diameter throughout its length, and a tapered portion (18) which has a maximum diameter equivalent to the outer diameter of the cylindrical portion. One or more openings extend through the ceramic insulator substantially parallel to a central axis through the cylindrical portion and the tapered portion. In one aspect, the invention encompasses thermocouple assemblies which comprise ceramic insulators having a tapered portion and a cylindrical portion. One or more, openings extend through the ceramic insulators substantially along a central axis of the cylindrical portion and the tapered portion. The invention additionally includes methods of forming thermocouple assemblies and insulators.