

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

**TITLE OF INVENTION: INERT GAS DELIVERY FOR
REFLOW SOLDER FURNACES**

Electronic components, especially printed circuit boards, are reflow soldered in an inert atmosphere to reduce solder defects and the need for flux or cleaning. The inert atmosphere is provided in a hooded heating chamber (14), through which the electronic components pass on a conveyor (24), by porous sintered metal diffuser tubes (60, 52 & 64) situated above the conveyor and supplied with inert gas from both ends thereof. Inert gas knives (58,66) situated in baffle compartments (26,28) at the inlet and outlet of the chamber (14) strip barrier layers of oxygen atmosphere from electronic components and preclude ingress of oxygen atmosphere into the chamber (14).

Figure 1 should accompany the abstract when published.