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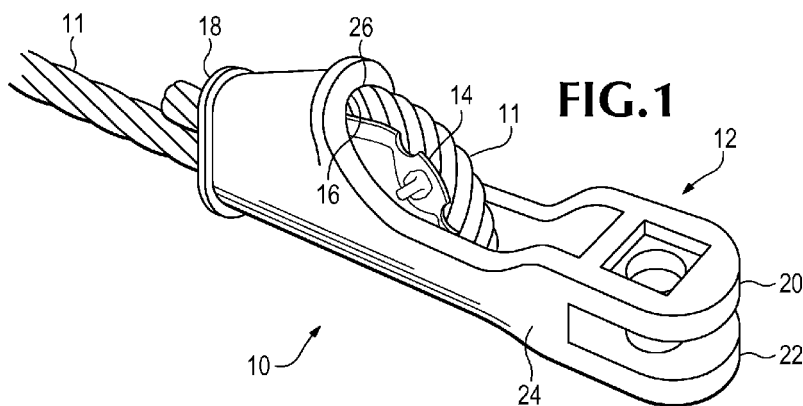
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(54) Title: WEDGE AND SOCKET ASSEMBLY



(57) Abstract: A socket and wedge assembly that securely holds wire rope and is easy to release includes a collapsible wedge. The wedge collapses at the front, narrowed end to utilize the high pressures at the front end of the wedge in effecting the collapse and releasing the rope. The wedge includes a movable element that pivots and/or translates to facilitate a quick and reliable collapse of the wedge and release of the wire rope. The wedge includes a cavity to at least partially exhaust the fumes created from cutting the support with a torch for release of the wire rope.