of lugs which project outwardly from the housings. The lugs are adapted to receive fasteners, such as nuts and bolts, which are adjustably tightenable to draw the segments toward one another.

Some retainers use teeth that are angularly oriented with respect to a line extending radially from an axis coaxial with the central space. The proper angular orientation allows the teeth to be "self-actuating", i.e., the mechanical engagement between the teeth and the pipe elements increases with increasing force on the pipe elements trying to draw or push them out of the coupling. Hence, the force resisting withdrawal increases with the applied force that would otherwise cause withdrawal. However, if such retainers are oriented improperly, for example, if the retainer is reversed within the coupling, then the teeth will not be self-actuating against forces which would draw or push the pipe element out of the coupling. Thus the retainer would not provide sufficient mechanical engagement against withdrawal and the pipe elements will not be securely held within the coupling. For couplings having retainers it is difficult to determine if the retainers are properly oriented once the coupling has been installed. It would be advantageous if pipe couplings could be designed so that the user is alerted if the retainer is not properly oriented during assembly of the joint.

Summary

According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a coupling for joining pipe elements, said coupling comprising:

a plurality of segments attached to one another end to end surrounding a central space for receiving said pipe elements, each of said segments comprising:

at least a first channel positioned on a first side of said segments, said first channel extending between said ends of said segments;

a first aperture in at least one of said segments, said first aperture providing a line of sight toward said central space.

According to a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of joining pipe elements, said method comprising:

inserting at least a first pipe element into a central space defined by a plurality of segments attached to one another end to end in spaced relation sufficient to permit insertion of said pipe elements;

observing, through a first aperture in at least one of said segments, whether or not said first pipe element is present within said central space.

The invention concerns a coupling for joining pipe elements. In one example embodiment the coupling comprises a plurality of segments attached to one another end to end surrounding a central space for receiving the pipe elements. By way of example there may be no more than a first and a second segment. Each of the segments comprises first and second channels positioned on opposite sides of the segments. Each of the channels extends between the ends of the segments and has a first floor and a second floor facing the central space. The first floor has a greater radius of curvature than the second floor.