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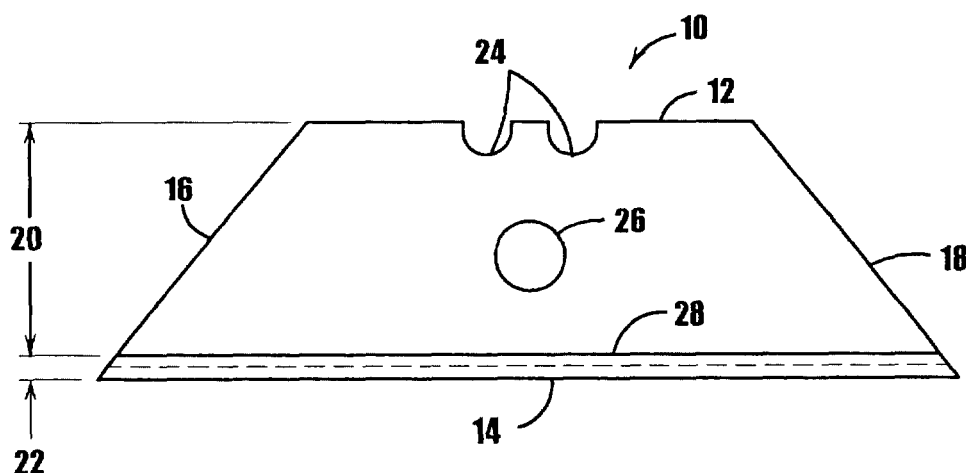
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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **AMERICAN SAW & MFG. COMPANY** [US/US]; 301 Chestnut Street, P.O. BOX 504, East Longmeadow, MA 01028-0504 (US).
- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **KORB, William, B.** [US/US]; 153 Melrose Road, Melrose, CT 06049 (US). **DOUGLAS, Brian, K.** [US/US]; 47 Spruceland Road, Enfield, CT 06082 (US). **OLIVEIRA, Marcelo** [BR/BR]; Rua. Abilio Borin, 35, Santo Amaro, Sao Paulo, SP (BR).
- (74) Agents: **GIARRATANA, Mark, D.** et al.; Cummings & Lockwood, Granite Square, 700 State Street, P.O. Box 1960, New Haven, CT 05609-1960 (US).
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(54) Title: COMPOSITE UTILITY KNIFE BLADE, AND METHOD OF MAKING SUCH A BLADE



(57) Abstract: A composite utility knife blade (10) and method of making such a blade involves butt joining a tool steel wire (44) to a front edge of an alloy steel backing strip (34). The wire (44) is electron beam welded to the backing strip (34) to form a composite strip (46) defining a first metal portion (20) formed by the alloy steel backing strip (34), a second metal portion (22) formed by the tool steel wire (44), and a weld region (28) joining the first and second metal portions (20, 22). The composite strip (46) is then annealed, and the annealed strip is straightened to eliminate any camber therein. The annealed composite strip (46) is then hardened such that the first metal portion (20) defines a surface hardness within the range of approximately 38 Rc to approximately 52 Rc, and the second metal portion (20) defines a surface hardness within the range of approximately 60 Rc to approximately 75 Rc.



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