

SUN SCREEN AND DISPLAY SYSTEM FOR PICKUP TRUCKS AND THE LIKE

CLAIM OF PRIORITY

This application claims priority of prior provisional Application Ser. No. 60/588,267 filed Jul. 15, 2004, the entire content of which is incorporated herein by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates generally to vehicular accessories and more particularly to an accessory for the rear windows of pickup trucks and the like which simultaneously provides sun screening and display of graphics such as advertising, artwork, etc.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

As is well known, all modern vehicles are provided with visors which can be deployed either at the windshield or at the side windows of the vehicle to limit glare from the sun thereby facilitating safe driving and comfort. Although the use of visors for the windshields and side windows of automobiles, pickup trucks, and other vehicles has been standard practice for decades, devices for preventing glare from the sun from entering vehicles through the rear windows thereof are uncommon. It has been known, however, to provide pickup trucks with an accessory comprising vertically spaced louvers which slope downwardly thereby preventing glare and heat from sun the sun from entering the vehicle while affording at least limited visibility through the rear window thereof.

The present invention comprises an accessory for pickup trucks and similar vehicles which simultaneously prevents glare and heat from the sun from entering the vehicle through the rear window thereof and facilitates the display of graphics such as advertising, artwork, etc. In accordance with the broader aspects of the invention a plurality of louvers are formed from a mirrored semi-transparent material, for example, plastic sheet material. The louvers are pivotally supported on a frame and are arranged in an equally spaced, overlapping array. The louvers are manually or mechanically positionable relative to the rear window of the vehicle upon which the accessory is installed.

In accordance with more specific aspects of the invention the louvers are selectively positionable in any of three orientations. In the first orientation the louvers extend angularly downwardly and substantially parallel to the rear window of the vehicle thereby facilitating the display of a first graphic. In the second orientation the louvers extend perpendicularly to the rear window thereby facilitating maximum visibility therethrough. In the third orientation the louvers extend angularly upwardly and substantially parallel to the rear window thereby facilitating the display of a second graphic.

An alternative embodiment of the present invention employs triangular louvers having three surfaces on which graphics can be displayed thereby facilitating additional display of advertising, graphics, and the like. The triangular louvers are more rigid than substantially flat louvers and thereby eliminate any catching of the louvers or chatter caused by overlap of the louvers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A more complete understanding of the present invention may be had by reference to the following Detailed Description when taken in connection with the accompanying Drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a pickup truck having the accessory of the present invention installed thereon;

FIG. 2A is an enlargement of a portion of FIG. 1 showing the louvers of the accessory in a first orientation;

FIG. 2B is a view similar to FIG. 2A showing the louvers of the accessory in a second orientation;

FIG. 2C is a view similar to FIG. 2A showing the louvers of the accessory in a third orientation;

FIG. 3 is a view similar to FIG. 2A illustrating a second embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 4 is an enlargement of a portion of FIG. 2A illustrating a first mechanism for manipulating the louvers of the accessory of the present invention;

FIG. 5 is an illustration similar to FIG. 4 showing a second mechanism for manipulating the louvers of the accessory of the present invention;

FIG. 6A is an illustration similar to FIG. 2A showing the accessory of the present invention installed on a pickup bed cover and illustrating the louvers of the accessory in a first orientation;

FIG. 6B is a view similar to FIG. 6A illustrating the louvers of the accessory in a second orientation;

FIG. 6C is a view similar to FIG. 6A showing the louvers of the accessory in a third orientation;

FIG. 7 is a view similar to FIG. 4 showing the accessory of the present invention employing triangular louvers; and

FIG. 8 is a view similar to FIG. 1 showing the accessory of the present invention installed on a tailgate of a pickup truck.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring now to the drawings and particularly to FIG. 1 thereof, there is shown a pickup truck 10 having an accessory 12 comprising the present invention installed thereon. Although a particular type of pickup truck is illustrated in the drawings, it will be understood that the invention is equally applicable to a wide variety of types and kinds of pickup trucks and similar vehicles.

The accessory 12 comprises a frame 14 which may be manufactured from a wide variety of materials including steel, aluminum, and other metals; polyethylene, polystyrene, polyvinylchloride, and other plastics; and other materials including wood. The frame 14 is secured to the cab and/or to the walls of the bed of the pickup truck 10 and is generally vertically oriented. A plurality of louvers 16 are mounted on the frame 14 for pivotal movement with respect thereto. As will become more apparent hereinafter, the louvers 16 are selectively positionable in any of the three orientations relative to the frame 14 of the accessory 12. The frame 14 may also be provided with a lamp 18 for illuminating the bed of the pickup truck 10, running lights 20, and other features.

The louvers 16 of the accessory 12 of the present invention preferably have a mirrored, i.e., provided with reflective exterior surface on at least one side thereof. In this manner the prevention of glare and heat from the sun from entering the interior of the cab of the pickup truck is maximized. Notwithstanding the reflective exterior surface thereof the louvers 16 are constructed to be as transparent as possible thereby facilitating the ability of the driver of the pickup truck to see through the rear window thereof. The louver 16 may be manufactured from the plastic material sold by General Electric