By Mike McNamee

Although the snow that buried MIT and the rest of Boston last week made some beautiful pictures as portrayed on this page, it presented many problems to those who had to deal with it.

Physical Plant reported that employees were working sixteen hours a day last week to remove the eleven inches of white stuff that hit New England in two days. Travelers and commuters found that trips that usually took 40 minutes to three hours, with stalled and stuck cars and icy roads making driving near-impossible. Many residents of West Campus dorms who parked their cars on Memorial Drive had to go into the storm to move them when the city declared a snow emergency and started to tow cars parked on main thoroughfares.

Those were just a few of the problems.

Larry Pickard, Manager of Grounds in Physical Plant, had nothing but praise for the crews that worked to clear the Institute's streets and sidewalks. "I saw a guy 63 years old shoveling snow from 5am to 9 at night," he told The Tech. Although Pickard tried to hold down the amount of overtime that employees were asked to work - "They used to work them around the clock when it snowed," he said - the circumstances of the storm necessitated some work at odd hours. "This storm made us feel like we were taking one step forward and ten back," he said. "Areas would get covered over and freeze up again faster than we could clear them."

Pickard's staff of about forty workers and supervisors shoveled, plowed, and spread sand and chemicals Wednesday through Saturday. The Institute does not use salt to melt ice, according to Pickard, because of the potential for damage to the shrubs and trees on the grounds. "We figure that the extra cost of the chemicals we use is more than compensated for by the savings that result," he explained.

"Considering the type of storm," Pickard concluded, "I think we came out smelling pretty good."

Few Injuries

One item usually associated with snow storms like last week's - an increase in the number of injuries due to falls and other accidents apparently did not occur at MIT last week. "There was no significant increase in the number of accidents in conjunction with the storm last week," Dr. Albert J. Seeler, Head of the Medical Department, announced Monday. "Frankly, we were surprised that there weren't."

Institute employees were granted an early release at about 3:30pm Wednesday, the first day of the storm, to allow more daylight for them to drive home. The decision to release employees was made by Vice President for Administration and Personnel John Wynne, with the advice of other personnel officials, according to Personnel Relations Director Robert J. Davis. "I heard of no important specific problems caused by the storm," Davis said, "Supervisors might have heard of some problems, but none were reported to me."