Weak roof closes Kresge
Date to reopen auditorium indefinite

By Tom Curtis

Kresge Auditorium has been indefinitely closed following the discovery of loose concrete in the auditorium’s roof edge beams. The problem was discovered while workers were doing preparatory work for next year’s scheduled replacement of the roof coating. When the workers removed the old coating near the western abutment of the roof, they found several inches of loose concrete. They removed some of this concrete, which, decided the company, before too much of the beam was taken away.

William R. Dickson, Director of Physical Plant, ordered the closing Friday afternoon. Although Dickson says he strongly doubts the roof will collapse, the possibility exists and therefore Kresge was closed. The closing was recommended to Dickson by the firm of Ammann and Whitney, the structural engineering consultants who had advised the original Kresge architect Eero Saarinen. Since Kresge opened in 1935, the firm has periodically advised MIT on structural matters pertaining to Kresge.

Dickson said he is working on the assumption that Kresge will not be reopened before next spring’s replacement of the roof coating. Thus, Kresge could be closed until next September. He did not completely rule out a reopening this winter, but he did rule out a reopening within the next two months.

Engineers are now analyzing Kresge to find out how much deterioration has occurred and why it occurred. Apparently, the problem was caused by water seeping under the roof, however, the reason for the seepage is unknown, according to Dickson. Dickson says the analysis will also check the other two Kresge roof abutments. However, he says he knows the abutments are in better shape than the western one. Dickson said he is “absolutely positive” that some repairs will need to be made before Kresge can be reopened. He also said he thought it was “very likely” that the lead coating and all the other materials that cover the concrete would be taken off now to lessen the stress on the concrete, and would be replaced by a temporary covering. Originally, the lead coating was not to have been removed until spring.

As a result of the Kresge closing, several events had to be

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Apathy causes UAC reorganization

By Agnes Huang

“The Urban Action Committee (UAC) acts as a volunteer clearinghouse. We locate those who want to do volunteer work and turn them over to the organizations that need them,” explained Chris Wheeler, ‘81, acting director of UAC, at an organizational meeting held last Thursday.

The committee is receiving a new lease on life this year, according to the spokesmen, because of apathetic student apathy. Ten to twenty years ago, UAC was a part of TCA (Technology Community Association). In 1969, it became independent, Wheeler said. However, reduced student interest in joining the committee has resulted in a re-establishment of TCA in ‘keep it alive.’

Dick Fletcher, the second member of the UAC trio, stated that ‘few student activists’ was the main reason behind the judging of UAC. For the early days (mid 60’s), the UAC people were getting a lot out of their volunteer experiences and were sharing it. That element went away gradually,” he added. Although UAC does not sponsor any specific volunteer activity, several area organizations work closely with the group and the MIT community. Services include volunteer tutoring and a community of students, called “Tutoring Plus,” Big Brother-Big Sister, Group School, and the Council of Aging sent delegates.

Volunteers are needed for these and other MIT sponsored community activities. For more information, contact Fletcher, but “Urban Action also needs people to join the committee,” he said. At present, we have only three members, Sue Temple ‘80, Chris Wheeler, and myself.”

According to Fletcher, the major objective of UAC, at present, is to “get it going again.” Plans for the future are dependent upon student response to the organization. “It’s a lot of fun and you learn a lot,” grins Fletcher.

Unlike many organizations, UAC is unable to offer any incentive for joining the group other than, as Fletcher puts it, the “satisfaction one gets from doing volunteer work.”

Anyone interested in doing service work is urged by the Urban Action Committee to call TCA at 3-4885 and leave their name at the desk.