

Keeping Tulane Green

August 18, 2009 11:30 AM Ryan Rivet
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Summer in New Orleans usually can be counted on for two things — heat and rain. While the heat has been here, earlier in the summer the rain proved to be an exception to the rule. For more than a month, dry conditions prevailed, leaving New Orleanians with little choice but to break out hoses, sprinklers and watering cans. For the Tulane grounds crew on the uptown campus, it meant mobilizing a work force to do everything possible to keep more than 100 acres of green space alive through drought conditions.

"For the month of dry weather, we watered," says grounds supervisor Mike Case. "If you weren't on the end of a hose watering, you were fixing irrigation lines, and we had a couple of people over by Rogers Chapel praying for rain."

According to grounds superintendent Tom Armitage, the job was complicated by the fact that the new vegetation, planted since Hurricane Katrina, is more susceptible to arid conditions. Despite a deficit of roughly a foot of rain throughout June and into July, the grounds crew's efforts paid dividends, ultimately keeping the campus green

In this video by Ryan Rivet, grounds supervisor Mike Case and grounds superintendent Tom Armitage detail the steps they've taken this summer to keep the campus flora thriving. Interviews by Nick Marinello and additional photography by Paula Burch-Celentano.