
On the Grounds

This sump, located somewhere on campus, is part of an elaborate chilled-water system that helps lower temperatures in buildings at Caltech. It collects water sprayed out through dozens of nozzles at the top of a series of cooling towers. Large fans pull air up through the water as it falls, creating an evaporative cooling effect. Once cooled, the tower water can absorb heat from a separate volume of water that circulates around campus and winds up back at the tower, where it transfers some of the heat it picked up along the way. So where at Caltech can you see these waterfalls in action?

Answer: The sump and the cooling towers shown in the picture are part of the Central Utility Plant.

