



Bobby gives Willie the shakes

IF YOU were huddled around your kitchen table with 280-km winds roaring past your house and flood waters lapping at the door, what would be your major concern?

"Well I knew my wife could climb the ladder onto the roof, but I had no idea how I was going to get my Willie on the roof," says Graham Waddingham.

Willie, more affectionately known as "Horse" by Onslow's Water Authority workers, is Graham Waddingham's faithful hound.

Willie weighs just over 68kgs (150 lb), stands taller than a postman's nightmare and has more than a few hang-ups.

"My wife suggested rigging a block and tackle and winching him onto the roof, while I was weighing up the possibility of getting Willie to climb the ladder," Waddingham says, wincing at the memory.



After the danger had passed and the local sense of humour had a chance to recover, those less affectionate towards "Horse" suggested attaching a life-raft to each leg would have been the better solution.

But it was no laughing matter for Willie, who was so traumatised by cyclone Bobby that he hung on to all his canine bodily functions and refused to venture outdoors.

"I virtually had to drag him outside and show him it was safe to do his business," Waddingham says.

But the future looks bright for Willie. The family's annual holiday to Cowaramup in the cyclone free south-west is still on. That means a ride in the ute and an overnight stay at a motel in Carnarvon.

When it comes to his master's ute, Willie is a legend in Carnarvon. As a welcoming gift the motel management serves Willie a freshly roasted, succulent leg of mutton while he stands guard in the back of the Waddingham ute.

Motel management vehemently deny the mutton has anything to do with the preservation of other guests.

-DENISE GIBB