Michigan State Housing Development Authority

Compliance Audit Response System (CARS)

http://housing.state.mi.us/opic

User Guide
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1. Introduction

In an effort to streamline the Owner/Management Agent file audit response process, MSHDA has developed a new web application that gathers file audit data into the Compliance database. This data is then used to streamline the creation of the Owner Certification of File Audit Corrections and the Owner's Report of File Audit Corrections forms. This web application is called Compliance Audit Response System (CARS).

1.1 Purpose

Three main purposes for CARS are:

- CARS system creates a single point of entry for certifying the corrective actions and correction dates for file audit findings for Owners/Agents.
- Pulls file audit data directly from the file audit report and pushes the data to the Owner's Report of File Audit Corrections Report.
- Allows MSHDA to collect the certification data electronically and link it to the file audit data.

1.2 Benefits

There are many benefits to using CARS which are:

- Saves time by eliminating manual data entry of file audit findings.
- Takes the guess work out of how to prepare and format the forms.
- Automatically creates the Owner Certification of File Audit Corrections and the Owner's Report of File Audit Corrections forms when correction data is entered.
- Reduces data entry errors and the chance of missing a file finding.
- Enables efficient electronic tracking of uncorrected file findings.

2. Accessing CARS

CARS is accessible through the MSHDA Compliance Portal. User Access is dependent on the contact information in the MSHDA Compliance database. To obtain access to CARS, one of the following must apply:

1. The user is the designated owner contact for a property monitored by MSHDA Compliance.

OR

1. The user is an auditor assigned to a property monitored by MSHDA Compliance.

OR

1. The user is the designated management agent contact for a property monitored by MSHDA Compliance.

AND

2. The owner has verified the user as the management agent contact.

AND

3. The owner has not denied the user access to the property as the management agent contact.

2.1 System Requirements

CARS is designed to be browser and operating system independent.

The minimum system requirements are:

- Windows XP or above
- Internet Explorer 8

CARS also can work with Macs, tablets and mobile devices.

2.2 Obtaining a Username - Gaining Access

The owner and management agent contacts for each property have been entered and verified in the MSHDA Compliance database. Each contact has been sent an email notice regarding implementation of CARS. Owners and management companies that have not received an email from MSHDA Compliance regarding CARS will need to gain access to CARS by following the steps listed below. Please note that the email address in the MSHDA Compliance database for each owner and management agent contact will serve as the user's "username". To gain access to CARS please follow the below steps:

Owners:
Submit a "Notice of Change in Ownership" form to MSHDA Compliance and contact MSHDA Compliance to request email setup in CARS. The forms can be found at:
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mshda/mshda_crh_f_yer14_notice_change_in_ownership_304063_7.pdf (PDF version)
or
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mshda/mshda_crh_f_yer14_notice_change_in_ownership_304064_7.doc (Word version)

Management Agents:
Contact the Owner and request that a "Notice of Change in Management" form be submitted to MSHDA Compliance. The form can be found at
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mshda/mshda_crh_f_yer13_notice_change_in_mgmt_agent_304062_7.doc.

2.3 Obtaining a New User Password or Password Reset

A user password is required to access CARS. If you already have a username/password for the Owner's Physical Inspection Certification System (OPIC), then you can use your current password, otherwise, to activate a user account and obtain a password, follow the steps below:

1. Go to http://housing.state.mi.us/opic
2. In the Email field, enter your email address. Note: The password field should be left blank.
3. Click on the 'New Password?' Link.
4. A message should display that states "Check email for new password." Check for a new email message that contains your new password.

2.4 Logging into CARS

1. Go to http://housing.state.mi.us/opic
2. In the 'Email' field, enter your email address.
3. In the 'Password' field, enter the password you received via email.
4. Click on 'Log In'.

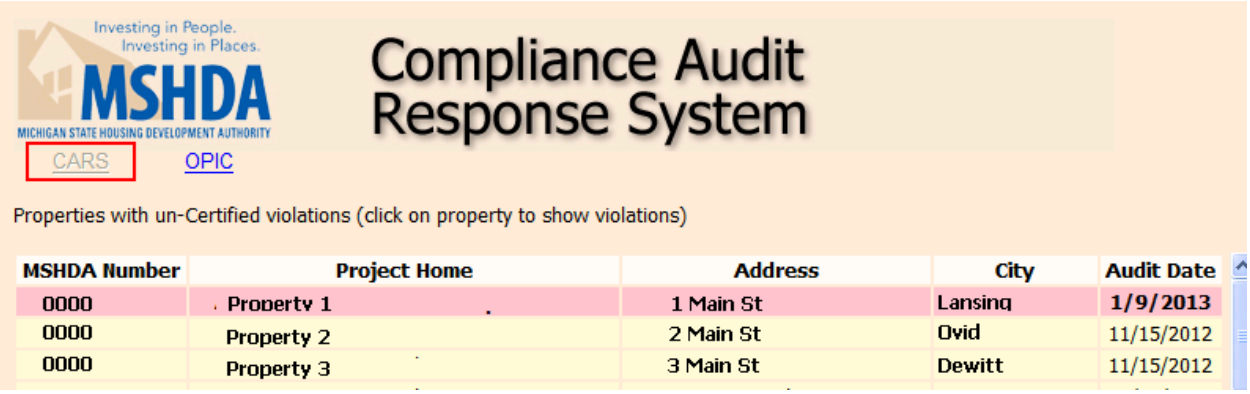
Select the CARS link

3. Using CARS

After successfully logging in and selecting CARS, the user is able to select a property and enter responses to file audit findings as well as correction dates. If a property does not have any file audit findings then it will automatically be closed and will not show on the list. Owners can also enter the manager setup which will be discussed later.

Note: If a property has no file audit findings, but does have vacancy issues, then only a vacancy response prepared outside of CARS is necessary. If there are file audit findings, CARS does not produce a vacancy response so the vacancy response still must be produced outside of CARS and attached to any necessary forms and documentation.

3.1 Selecting a property



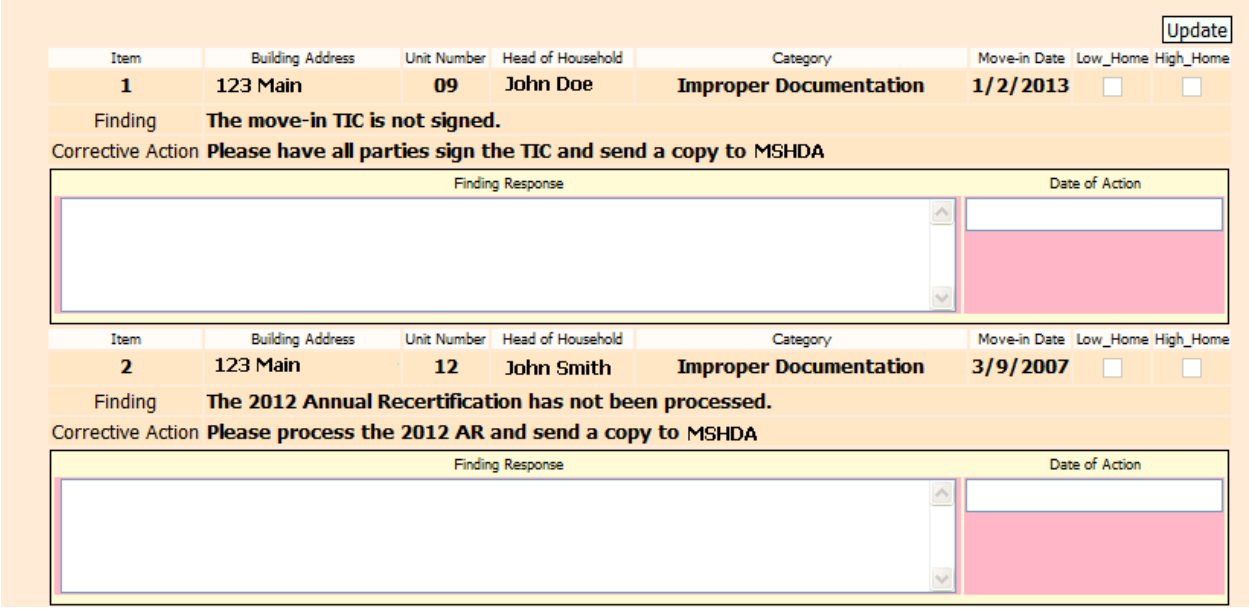
Once logged in, a list of properties will be displayed. Click on a listed property to select it. This will load and display the file audit findings related to the selected property.

Note: If a management agent does not see a specific property listed, contact the owner to ensure that the owner has authorized access to the property:

1) *. If management agent or management contact name are incorrect, the owner will need to complete and submit a "Notice of Change in Management" form as described in Section 2.1.*
2) *If the management agent and contact name are correct, the owner must grant system access to the user.*

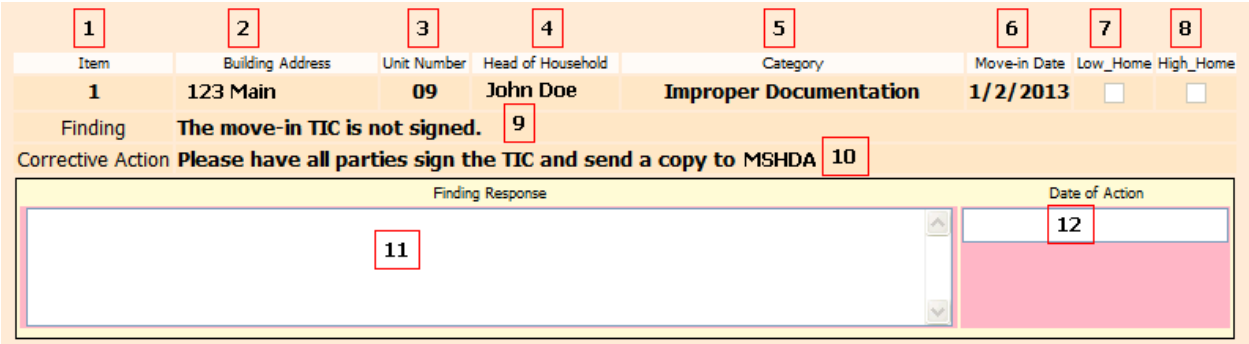
3.2 File Audit Findings

The list of file audit findings is pulled directly from the File Audit Report. Below is an example of a file audit finding list. Please note that the file audit findings displayed for each property are the findings the auditor entered into the property's File Audit Report.



3.2.1 Anatomy of a File Audit Finding:

Below is a breakdown of the data fields for a particular finding. The areas numbered 1 through 9 are pulled from the File Audit Report data and automatically populated into the appropriate finding field. Areas 10 and 11 are the fields the agent/owner must enter to certify correction of each finding.



Automatically populated fields:

1. **Item** – Shows the row number of the file audit finding
2. **Building Address** – Shows the building address of the file audit finding.
3. **Unit Number** – Shows the unit number of the file audit finding.
4. **Head of Household** – Displays the name of the tenant.
5. **Category** – The category the finding falls under.
6. **Move-in Date** – The date the tenant moved in.
7. **Low_Home** – If the project has MSHDA-administered HOME funding, the checkbox is checked if it is a low home unit.
8. **High_Home** – If the project has MSHDA-administered HOME funding, the checkbox is checked if it is a high home unit.

9. **Finding** – Description of the file audit finding.
10. **Corrective Action** – Action to be taken to correct the finding.

User input fields:

11. **Finding Response** – Describe corrective actions that have been completed.
12. **Date of Action** – The date the corrective action was completed. The date must be in the following format: m/d/yyyy. Example: 1/5/2011.

3.2.2 Entering a finding response

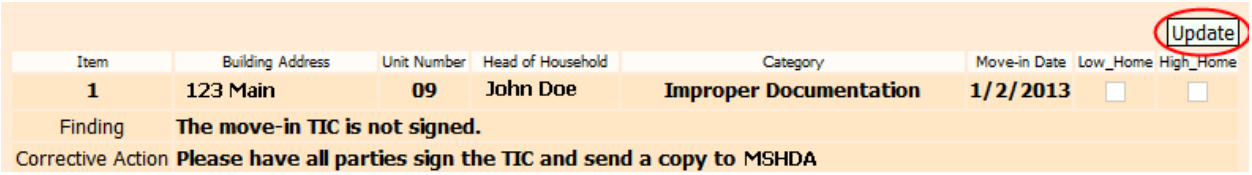
To enter a finding response, follow the steps below:

1. Identify the finding by the building address, unit #, and head of household.
2. Enter a description of the corrective actions taken into the 'Finding Response' field.
3. Enter the date the action was completed in the 'Date of Action' field.

NOTE: If date format is entered incorrectly, you will not be able to change fields until the date has been corrected. The date should be in an m/d/yyyy format, for example, 1/1/2012.

3.3 Saving Your Data

After responses have been entered for the findings or before you exit the website after partially entering data, click on the update button located at the top or bottom of the list of file findings to save the data that was entered.

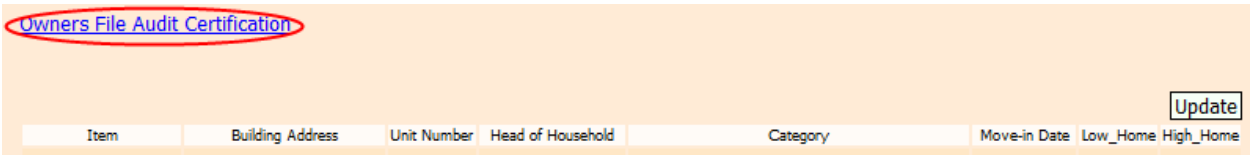


NOTE: The website does not automatically save data. If you do not click update, the information entered will be lost!

3.4 Printing the Owner Certification and File Audit Corrections forms

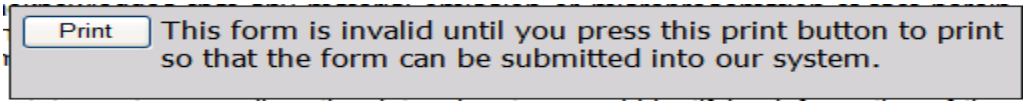
As previously mentioned, CARS generates the Owner Certification of File Audit Corrections and the Owner's Report of File Audit Corrections forms. To create these documents, click on the 'Owner Audit File Certification' link located at the left top of the findings list.

Note: vacancy issue responses and backup documentation must be provided outside of CARS and attached to the printed reports from CARS. If a property did not have any file audit deficiencies, then only a vacancy issue response created outside of CARS is necessary.



3.4.1 Print Preview

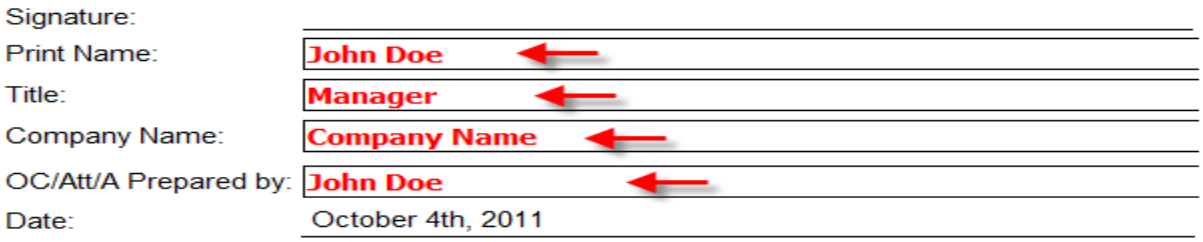
Clicking on the "Print" link, will display a print preview of the Owner Certification of File Audit Corrections and the Owner's Report of File Audit Corrections form. A working copy can also be printed, however; these documents are not a valid form and **should not** be submitted to MSHDA at this point. The working copy will have the watermark print on it stating "This form is invalid until you press the "Print" button which submits the data into the Compliance database" so it will be easy to recognize non-official copies. Owners/agents must review the print preview or working copy version of the report to verify that all required data has been entered and that the data entered is complete and accurate.



When viewing the print preview screen, certain fields may be edited. Most fields that may be edited have red text in a box (Except for the submission #). If the default information is not correct, you can change it by clicking in the editable text box.

The following fields are able to be modified in print preview:

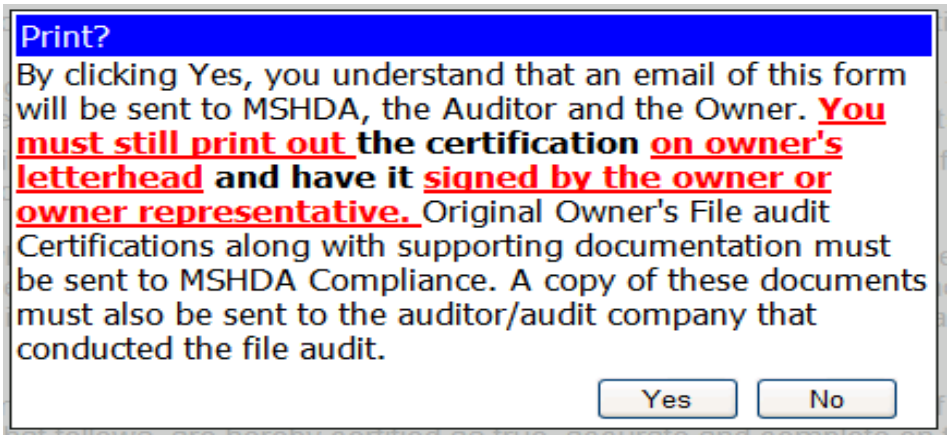
- 'Print Name', 'Title', 'Company Name', and 'OC/Att/A Prepared by' on the Owners Certification form.



- 'Submission #' on the Owner's Report of File Audit Corrections.

3.4.2 Printing an official copy of the Owner Certification of File Audit Corrections and the Owner's Report of File Audit Corrections forms

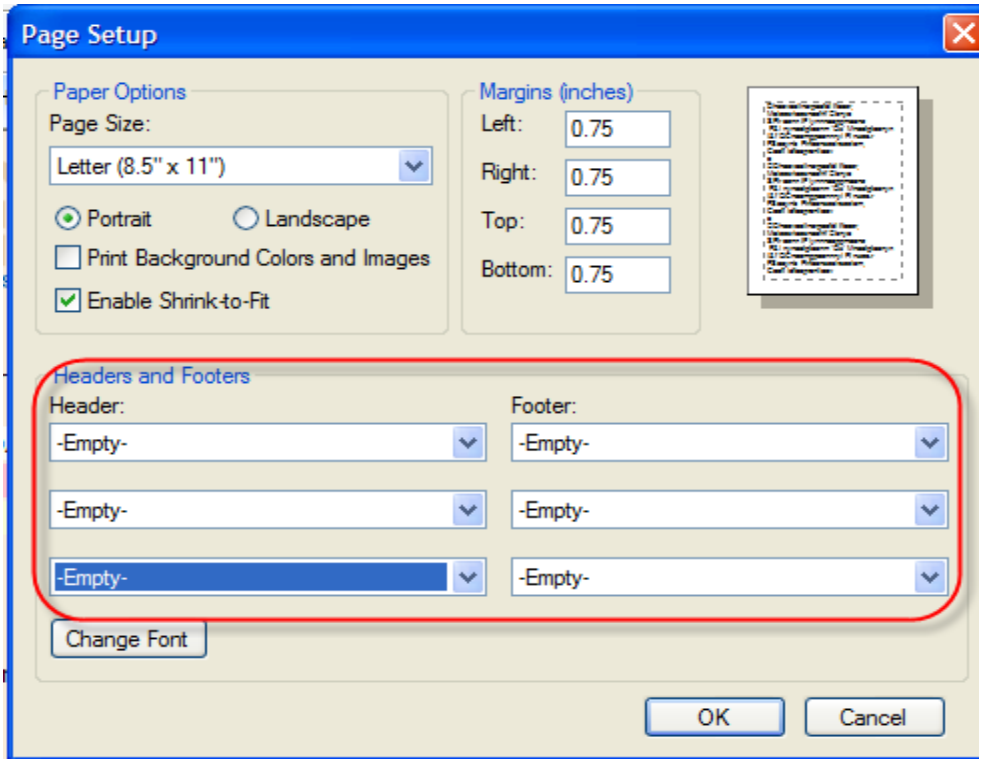
After the certification data is verified as complete and accurate and the default data is verified as correct, print the official copy of the forms by clicking on the print button again. The following message will be displayed:



By clicking "Yes", the form will be finalized, an electronic copy will be sent to MSHDA, the auditor, and the owner. Additionally, a dialog box will pop up to allow printer selection. Select the applicable printer and click "Print".

Note: You must disable the header and footer of the web browser so that it does not print onto the report. To disable the header and footer, follow the steps below (Internet Explorer):

1. In internet explorer, click on 'File' – 'Page Setup'. A new window will pop open.
2. Under the "Headers and Footers" section, make sure each header combo box is set to '-Empty-'



Important: The Owner's Certification form must be printed on the owner or management Company's letterhead and be signed by an authorized representative of the project owner. The signed original must be sent to MSHDA via postal service and a scanned copy must be sent to the auditor.

5. Managing Management Agents (Owners Only)

The CARS and OPIC Systems allow owners to deny a management agent access to specific properties.

5.1 Denying Management Agents Access to CARS and OPIC (Owners Only)

1. Click on the "Manager Setup" link located on the right top of the CARS or OPIC screen to access the Management setup screen.

2. In the Management Setup screen, a list of all properties associated with the user account will be displayed along with the name of the management company and the designated contact person for that company that currently has access to the property.

3. Uncheck the “Allow” box to revoke CARS and OPIC access for a management company, if needed.

5.2 Changing a Management Company or Agent Contact

If a change in management occurs at a property, a “Notice of Change in Management” form must be submitted to MSHDA Compliance. The form can be found in PDF format at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mshda/mshda_crh_f_yer13_notice_change_in_mgmt_agent_304061_7.pdf or in Word format at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mshda/mshda_crh_f_yer13_notice_change_in_mgmt_agent_304062_7.doc.

Once the form is received, MSHDA will make the appropriate database change to provide the new Management Agent with access to CARS and OPIC.

Appendix A Troubleshooting

Problem	Solution
Do I need a separate username and password for the Owner's Physical Inspection Certification System (OPIC)?	No. CARS and OPIC are now all part of the MSHDA Compliance Portal. Existing users of OPIC do not need to do anything. They will see CARS listed in the program list once they have logged in.
I forgot my password, what do I do?	Reset your password using the 'New Password?' link. For more information, please see section 2.3 of the CARS User Guide.
When I log in, I don't see a property listed that I need access to.	Management Agents: Contact the owner to ensure CARS access has been authorized for the property. Owners: Contact MSHDA Compliance. For more information, please see section 2 of the CARS User Guide.
I entered a date in a date field but it is still red and won't let me go to the next deficiency.	Ensure that the date is entered in the correct format: m/d/yyyy. For more information, please see the user guide.
I have entered all the data but I don't see it when I log back into CARS.	Make sure you clicked on the update button before closing the web browser. **In order for the data to be saved you MUST click on the update button.**
I have switched management companies but CARS doesn't show the new management company.	Owners must submit a "Notice of Change in Management" form to MSHDA Compliance. For more information, please see section 5.2 of the CARS User Guide.
I no longer see a specific property listed when I log in.	There are three other reasons why a property will be dropped from the list: 1. If an Owner Certification is not required. 2. A completed Owner Certification has been received and MSHDA closed the file audit. 3. The owner denies the management agent access. Management Agents: Contact the owner to ensure CARS access has been authorized for the property.

	If it is determined that none of the above reasons apply, contact MSHDA Compliance for assistance.
We just had a file audit with file findings. When I log into CARS, I don't see the property listed.	Due to timing factors with auditors, file audit data can take several days to get uploaded into the MSHDA Compliance database. Because of this, there can be times when a property is not yet available in the CARS system for several days.
Vacancy responses – I don't see any place to write my response to the vacancy issues noted in the file audit report.	The response to vacancy issues must be prepared outside of cars and attached to the printed certification along with any necessary backup documentation.
My property did not have any file audit findings but does have a vacancy issues. Do I have to use CARS for the vacancy issue response?	No, if a property does not have any file audit findings and only has a vacancy issue, then only a vacancy response prepared outside of CARS is necessary.
When I click on the print button, It gives me an error message.	This could happen if: There is not an owner listed or there is not a manager listed in the compliance database for the property. Please contact MSHDA Compliance to ensure that both contacts are in the compliance database.
When I click on the print button, it doesn't do anything.	Older installations of Firefox can result in this happening. Please update to the latest browser. Depending on system configurations, if issues still arise, please use internet explorer 8 or above. If issues still occur, please contact MSHDA Compliance.
Can there be more than one management user for CARS?	Yes. Please contact MSHDA Compliance for more information.
What are the automatic emails for?	The automatic emails are just notifications that let you know that a manager or owner has filled in data and printed the certification to send to MSHDA and the auditor. These can freely be deleted.
Do I still have to email/mail anything to the file auditor and MSHDA?	Please be aware that you must still print out the certification on owner's letterhead and have it signed by the owner or owner representative. Original file audit Certifications must be sent to MSHDA Compliance (MSHDA – Attn Compliance Monitoring, 735 East Michigan Avenue, P.O. Box 30044, Lansing, MI 48909). A copy of these documents must also be sent to the auditor/audit company that conducted the file

	audit.
The auditor closed the audit with findings still open and has referred me to MSHDA Compliance. Do I still need to use CARS for responses?	Yes, CARS still must be used to input your response to file audit findings for responses to our auditors as well as to MSHDA.