

How do I calculate evaporative losses?

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I'm looking at a reaction involving methanol for making biodiesel from vegetable oil. Methanol and caustic soda are mixed and added to vegetable oil. The reaction takes place at a range of temperatures between 40 and 65 degrees and usually lasts for an hour. The products are biodiesel and glycerine.

It can take place in a sealed vessel but more usually is done in a vessel with a lid which is not sealed.

I'm expecting some of the methanol will be lost by evaporation to atmosphere but how can I calculate the likely losses?

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